DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 241 676 CE 038 125

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|---|---|
| AUTHOR | Bendor-Samuel, David H.; Bendor-Samuel, Margaret M. |
| TITLE | Community Literacy Programmes in Northern Ghana. |
| INSTITUTION | Summer Inst. of Linguistics, Dallas, Tex. |
| REPORT NO | ISBN-0-88312-927-2 |
| PUB DATE | 83 |
| NOTE | 90p. |
| AVAILABLE FROM | Bookstore, Summer Institute of Linguistics, 7500 West Camp Wisdom Road, Dallas, TX 75236 ($8.50; quantity price--$6.80 each). |
| PUB TYPE | Books (010) -- Reports - Descriptive (141) |
| EDRS PRICE | MF01/PC04 Plus Postage. |
| DESCRIPTORS | Adult Basic Education; Adult Education; Adult Literacy; Adult Programs; Basic Skills; Case Studies; Developing Nations; Economic Development; *Educational History; Functional Literacy; *Literacy Education; Outcomes of Education; Program Descriptions; *Program Effectiveness; *Program Implementation; Reading Instruction |
| IDENTIFIERS | *Ghana; Summer Institute of Linguistics |

ABSTRACT

This study describes efforts by the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) to promote literacy among six language groups of northern Ghana during the years 1972-1979. The report is organized into three parts. Part I provides general background for an understanding and evaluation of what took place. It first describes the national and local setting of the language groups. This is followed by an introduction to SIL, its aims and methods, and a summary of the historical development of the project. A discussion of some factors that are of importance in understanding the project's rationale concludes this part of the study. Part II gives particulars of the way the literacy programs have worked out for each language group. Summary information is provided concerning the organization and development, personnel, classes, materials, problems, and results in each case. Part III assesses the degree of success or failure that the project has had and identifies key elements contributing to these results. Its positive effects from a developmental point of view are noted and discussed. Suggestions for possible improvements are also made, and the implications of the project are considered, both for SIL and for the nation of Ghana. (Author/KC)

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# COMMUNITY LITERACY PROGRAMMES in Northern Ghana

by
**David H. Bendor-Samuel**
and
**Margaret M. Bendor-Samuel**

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Summer Institute of Linguistics
Dallas, Texas
1983

CE 038 125

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ISBN 0-88312-927-2

Library of Congress Catalog Card No. 83-061218

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The Bookstore
Summer Institute of Linguistics
7500 W. Camp Wisdom Road
Dallas, TX 75236

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# Foreword

The present monograph represents a welcome addition to a growing literature concerning diverse aspects of literacy training and language education in developing countries. The Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) has, for many years, worked assiduously and productively in many countries of the world to develop literacy materials and literacy programmes. In all cases of which I am familiar, they have done so at the invitation and with the collaboration of the host country and with nationals from that country.

All too often, many of us have "complained" that SIL did not take the time to document its literacy activities or to open them to public scrutiny. We felt that the accumulated experiences of the group were a valuable, but unavailable, resource for those of us pursuing similar interests. The present monograph by David and Margaret Bendor-Samuel represents a timely and revealing addition to our body of knowledge about the development of basic literacy skills in developing countries. In this monograph, the authors describe work carried out by SIL field workers over many years to promote literacy among six language groups in Northern Ghana. The purpose of this monograph—to make available to others information concerning the development of these programmes and their results—is surely commendable. The language situation in Ghana and the economic and social conditions are sufficiently similar to conditions in many other countries to make this monograph particularly noteworthy.

David and Margaret Bendor-Samuel clearly and succinctly describe for us the trials and tribulations of conducting basic literacy development in such settings. What they manage to capture for us so clearly is the message that the implementation of literacy programmes will ultimately be successful only when the process involves community commitment and community involvement. The SIL field workers described in the monograph do go out of their way to facilitate such involvement.

The monograph is a clear description of the genesis of the literacy programmes in six language groups. The authors describe for us the context in which the programmes have developed: the attitudinal and other social forces at work which serve to facilitate or to hinder the success of such a project. They record for us the growth in numbers of participating students and the spin-off effect that the programmes seem to have in terms of other community development activities. However, the authors are also quite forthright in warning us that their description should be taken only as an indication of a first step in documenting the literacy development process. What is needed, they cogently argue, is more detailed record keeping, more systematic and rigorous testing procedures, and a commitment to look longitudinally at this process. Only by doing so will we be able to understand whether literacy skills, once developed, are indeed lasting, and whether the community commitment to literacy training which has begun, will continue even in the absence of SIL field workers.

In summary, the monograph is a welcome addition and should certainly be taken as an indication of SIL's commitment to make information of this type publicly available so that all of us can benefit.

G. Richard Tucker, Director
Center for Applied Linguistics
October, 1981

# Introduction and Abstract

This study is a report of efforts to promote literacy among six language groups of northern Ghana during the years 1972–1979. The organisation primarily responsible was the Summer Institute of Linguistics, Inc. (SIL), and the project was endorsed by various Ghanaian agencies, including the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development. Funding, for the major part of the work, was from the Evangelische Zentralstelle für Entwicklungshilfe e.v. of the German Federal Republic (E.Z.E.), and from SIL. The language groups involved were the Bimoba, Konkomba, Tampulma, Vagla, Kasem and Sisaala.

Part I provides general background for an understanding and evaluation of what took place. It first describes the national and local setting of the language groups. This is followed by an introduction to SIL, its aims and methods, and a summary of the historical development of the project. A brief discussion of some factors which are of importance in understanding the project's rationale concludes this part of the study.

Part II gives particulars of the way the literacy programmes have worked out for each language group in turn. Summary information is provided concerning the organisation and development, personnel, classes, materials, problems and results in each case.

Part III attempts to assess the degree of success or failure which the project has enjoyed, and to identify key elements contributing to these results. Its positive effects from a development point of view are noted and discussed. Suggestions for possible improvements are also made, and the implications of the project are considered, both for SIL and for the nation of Ghana.

The primary purpose of this study is to make available to other persons engaged in promoting literacy, information concerning these programmes in rural Ghana and their results to date. The programmes are of sufficient size,

have been developed according to a careful enough plan, and have achieved encouraging enough results that they are felt to be of significance to literacy practitioners and theoreticians in general, as well as to members of SIL working in other parts of the world. The authors are members of the SIL international staff, currently responsible for the coordination of the literacy aspects of its work.

# MAP OF GHANA

Showing general location of indigenous language groups.

# Part I
# General Background.

*National and Local Setting.*

The language situation in Ghana is similar in many ways to that in other countries of West Africa. The language of the former colonial power, in this case English, has become the language of government, commerce and higher education. The mother tongue of almost every Ghanaian, however, is one or other of many indigenous languages, some spoken by millions of people over a wide area, others by only a few thousand and in a limited area. The number of indigenous languages in use in Ghana may be as many as sixty, depending on the criteria used to distinguish a language from a dialect. No one indigenous language is used or accepted throughout the land as the national language. The Bureau of Ghana Languages has recognised ten of these languages for development, partly at least on the basis of the number of speakers. Educational policy, however, currently allows the use of any local language during the three years of primary schooling, with English used thereafter. The extent to which local languages are in fact so used differs from area to area.

According to the 1970 population census, the country-wide average of children aged 6–14 who attended school regularly was 58.1%. The percentage for the north of the country is markedly different however, namely 17.3% in the Northern Region, and 19.3% in the Upper Region. A corresponding contrast may also be observed for such related matters as fluency in English and the degree of literacy and use of literature.

Non-formal education activities of various kinds are carried on by the government Department of Social Welfare and Community Development, which has offices in most of the major population centres of the Northern and Upper Regions. Their actitivies include classes for the teaching of oral English, and for literacy in English. This agency is able to do little, if anything, toward literacy in local languages, in which in any case materials have not been generally available.

The present study is of literacy work among six language groups in the north of the country, namely Bimoba, Konkomba, Tampulma and Vagla in the Northern Region, and Kasem and Sisaala in the Upper Region (see the accompanying map). Of these, only Kasem is a language recognised by the Bureau of Ghana Languages. In common with other minority languages of the country, each of these enjoys a vigorous local strength among those brought up to use it as their mother tongue. Language groups are proud of their own speech form, and typically consider it superior to other local languages or dialects, openly disparaging other forms of speech. A healthy rivalry and competitive spirit characterise language groups in general, and no language is in any danger of dying out. A high degree of multilingualism is present, not merely in the larger population centres but to a lesser degree even in small villages. In villages close to roads or along trading routes, although the majority share the mother tongue dominant in that particular area, there will also be found several different groups whose first language is something else. People are thus exposed to several languages, and learn sufficient of a second or third at least for trade and social purposes. Marriages between members of different language groups are also fairly common. No one language has become dominant as a means of wider communication except at a local level.

A number of economic development projects have taken place throughout the north, sponsored by international organisations such as the World Bank or the German Agricultural Mission, or on a smaller scale by missionary organisations. Dams have been built, wells drilled, and improved farming methods introduced. There are a number of large commercial farming enterprises producing crops such as rice or cotton, and employing local people for a wage. For the most part, however, the occupation of the rural family remains subsistence farming by traditional methods, producing food primarily for the immediate family group with a little extra for sale to produce cash for some consumer goods. The chieftaincy system is still responsible for the regulation of local social affairs, and traditional forms of housing remain dominant.

Primary schools have been provided at all sizeable population centres, and secondary schools are to be found at larger centres, the education being available at minimal cost to all who desire it. There is however a deep seated ambivalence in the rural family's attitude to formal schooling. On the one hand, parents recognise that education and a command of English are necessary for prestigious and well-paid jobs, and would like to see their children succeed in this way. On the other hand, the school curriculum seems of little relevance to village life, and can only be obtained at a major hidden cost—the scholar is not available to take his share of work in the fields. If he persists in his studies through the six

primary grades or more, his chance of getting a paid job is not good, for opportunities are limited, and he will probably not fit happily back into a subsistence farming role. An educated son may thus become a liability rather than an asset to his family, not only while at school but for the rest of his life. In any case, it is only the occasional village child who will complete primary school, since English, the language of instruction, is very little used in a rural village and thus is hard to master. There is a high drop-out rate in village schools.

The low rate of enrolment in primary schools in the north, already cited, shows that the conflict between the desire for education and the fear of its effects on the family unit is generally resolved in favour of the latter. Big differences in attitude naturally exist from place to place, with the smaller villages generally showing the greatest resistance to efforts to get the children to attend school. A small minority of adults has received some schooling in most villages however, and a very few from almost every language group have gone on to secondary and even tertiary education.

*SIL and its programme.*

The Summer Institute of Linguistics, Inc. (SIL), is an international organisation with its headquarters in the U.S.A. Its work began with the training of field linguists and the study of minority languages in Mexico in 1934, and spread to various countries of Latin America and Asia during the 1950s. Work began in Ghana in 1962, where the organisation is known as the Institute of Linguistics. Since 1979 SIL members have worked under the auspices of the Ghana Institute of Linguistics, a Ghanaian organisation.

SIL's work revolves around two focal points. It is a group of volunteers who specialise, firstly, in the field of descriptive and applied linguistics, serving minority language groups and the nations of which they are a part. This service generally takes the form of learning and analysing little-studied or unstudied languages, devising orthographies, publishing descriptions of their phonological and grammatical systems, producing literacy materials, dictionaries and a beginning literature for them, all in cooperation with members of the language groups. Such work is generally done under an agreement with the appropriate government department or with a local university, and maintains a high academic standard.

Secondly, each member of the SIL combines with his formal linguistic work a personal desire to make the Christian Scriptures available for every person to read in his own language. The translation of parts of the Bible is therefore carried on at the same time as linguistic and literacy work, and personal discussion concerning the Christian faith is also

engaged in as interest in this develops. Such activities are informal, and no ecclesiastical or church-type work is undertaken; nor is the work identified with any denomination of the Christian church. SIL members have no guaranteed salary but are supported by gifts from friends and churches in their various homelands.

SIL commenced work in Ghana under a cooperative agreement with the Institute of African Studies of the University of Ghana at Legon, dated December, 1961. The agreement provided, inter alia, for SIL to undertake "the intensive study of some languages indigenous to Ghana which have not yet been studied, including an adequate analysis of their phonological and grammatical systems and a comprehensive collection of their vocabulary." SIL also undertook to provide the Institute with copies of all such materials, and to work in close cooperation with it. The publication of linguistic and anthropological materials arising from these studies was also to be cooperative.

SIL members began linguistic studies of Kasem, Konkomba and Sisaala in 1962, of Vagla in 1963, of Bimoba in 1964 and of Tampulma in 1967. In the early years attention to literacy work took the form of developing a practical orthography, of experimental work on reading primers and the teaching of a few individuals who were interested. Around 1972 attention began to be given to the development of a comprehensive literacy strategy. This was first worked out for the Bimoba, with the definition of specific objectives and the designing of an appropriate programme to reach these. This procedure was then extended to other languages, a single overall conceptual framework being utilised in each case, but with considerable flexibility of application to local circumstances. The distinctive characteristics of the literacy programmes may be summarised as follows. (Not all the details given are true of each programme, but the overall concepts are shared by all.) See also Appendices A and B for further particulars of the project and its underlying philosophy.

Adults and young people are in focus rather than children. Literateness is first attained in the local language, and then the skills of reading and writing are transferred to English, the language of education. This is considered necessary because of the almost complete ignorance of English, and the negative attitude to formal education on the part of illiterate persons in the areas where work takes place. The goal of the programmes is not to eradicate illiteracy, or even to make a majority of persons literate in a given area, but to start up a programme and a process which will become ongoing within a few years and will then continue without further contribution by SIL members. This implies the necessity to develop a positive attitude toward literateness to attain a sufficient quantity both of fluently literate persons and of appropriate literature available to them, and to develop a framework within which the teaching

of reading and writing, and the production and distribution of literature, can continue.

It was felt that six years was a reasonable time in which to attain these goals in a given language group. This assumed that significant progress had already been made in language learning and analysis, and in getting to know the cultural patterns and values of the people. For an SIL member starting work in a language, two or more additional years would need to be spent in such work before beginning a six-year literacy programme.

The project itself includes the following elements and emphases. Classes are offered at four levels:

I Basic skill attainment: working through a comprehensive primer or primer series to gain reading and writing control of all letters and other symbols in all contexts and combinations.

II Consolidation of skills: working through a series of easy reading books and writing exercises to establish fluency.

III Self-expression and oral English: practice in composing original mother tongue materials for others to read.

IV Written English.

Classes are generally offered in the evenings and only during the dry season so as not to conflict with the demands of farming activities.

Teachers are part-time and volunteers. Each receives a short training course before beginning to teach, and further training before beginning each subsequent season, plus one or two joint sharing sessions each season. The length of the courses varies up to a maximum of a week according to local circumstances. A very small number of full-time paid supervisors train and assist the teachers, visiting classes regularly, and handling administrative matters.

The materials provided include reading and writing primers, a number of easy reading booklets, further reading materials (all in each local language) and transition materials into English. The primers and transitional materials are first tested in experimental classes, and then printed in a definitive edition. Some of the reading materials are written by local people at local author workshops, and the remainder are the responsibility of the supervisors or the SIL members. Provision is made in the scheduling of the programme for the production of these materials by the time they are needed for the classes.

Another feature of the programme is the channeling of all arrangements through the local chiefs or elders—whatever the authority structure is—with attention also given to the arousing of interest and motivation by community activities. Festive Literacy Days are held at the close of each teaching season at which time the volunteer teachers are honoured and

those students who have passed their tests are presented with certificates of achievement.

A typical schedule for the six-year period devotes the first year to the preparation and testing of pedagogical materials for level I classes, to the awakening of community interest, and to the selection of personnel, through local chiefs, and their initial orientation. The second year sees level I classes started on a trial basis and in a limited geographical area, plus the preparation of materials for level II. In the third year, successful students from level I progress to level II, and additional classes at level I are started in other areas. Literacy Day celebrations, teacher training, and materials preparation for level III also take place. The fourth and fifth years see successful students progressing to levels III and IV, with further classes being started at levels I and II. Production of materials continues, and includes local author workshops. The sixth year has classes operating at all levels, with tested materials available in a definitive form. It also marks the point at which the SIL member begins to withdraw from the programme, ideally leaving it in trained and experienced local hands, and supported by local authorities who are convinced of its value.

If such a transfer of responsibility is to be effective at the end of the sixth year, it is essential for local leaders to be involved in decision making and programme implementation from the earliest stages. It is also essential that the responsibility for the preparation of materials and the training and supervision of teachers be first shared with, and then handed over to, local people. The SIL members therefore, although they need to have an overall plan as a starting point, have to develop each programme in cooperation with the local people with much flexibility and sensitivity to specific situations. If the programme does not meet felt needs and follow acceptable patterns of behaviour, it will surely fail.

The financial costs of such a programme are kept to a minimum since the teachers are volunteers, and classes are held in the open or use existing buildings. Expenses are incurred for salaries for the few supervisors (two or three to a programme), and for transport costs for them to visit classes in distant locations (by bicycle or light motorcycle). The other major cost is that of printing the pedagogical materials (students generally pay a subsidised price), and the reading books (also sold at a subsidised price). Beside this there is expense for minimal office and storage facilities at rural centres, for blackboards and chalk, for token gifts in kind to honour the volunteer teachers and for the workshops and teacher training courses.

The SIL, as a small group of volunteer workers, had no means to finance so ambitious a project. As the Bimoba programme developed during 1973 and 1974, some special gifts were received and some grant funds secured from the Canadian International Development Agency. It

was clear however that this programme could not be continued, and programmes in other languages could not be started, without the guarantee of significant financial support from some third party. Support from the local community might be expected to carry a successful programme on beyond its sixth year if it was meeting a felt need. However, such support was not expected at the start of the programme.

No funds were available from the government of Ghana. Being a non-formal educational experiment, it lay outside the scope of the education authority. The department of Social Welfare and Community Development was interested in the project and ready to facilitate it with cooperation at the local level, but all its available funds were committed to projects to foster literacy which were carried on in English and in areas of greater population concentration. The SIL therefore requested funds from the Evangelische Zentralstelle f2ur Entwicklungshilfe, e.v. of the German Federal Republic. In 1975 a proposal entitled "The Northern Ghana Literacy Project" was submitted, requesting funds for a six-year project of the type described above to be carried out in ten language groups of Northern Ghana, including the languages covered in this study. After discussion with E.Z.E. officers, a grant was authorised for a three-year period only. The E.Z.E. was to be responsible for 75% of the costs and the SIL for 25%, with the work of the SIL members being reckoned as the major contribution of that organisation. Included as an appendix is part of a letter from SIL to E.Z.E. at the time of this proposal. It contains valuable additional information on the approach of SIL to this project, and its sensitivity to local factors. Also appended is the activity sequence chart included in the proposal submitted to the E.Z.E.

The objectives of the Northern Ghana Literacy Project, as stated in the proposal to the E.Z.E., were as follows.

1. "To promote literacy and the use of literature among the language groups specified in such a way as to bring about a comprehensive improvement in the welfare of the local population:

Physical—through increased knowledge of good health, etc.

Social—through an improved mode of life and work.

Intellectual—through an introduction to education in the local language and in English, the national language.

Spiritual—through an introduction to books of high moral value, including the translation of the New Testament.

2. "To promote an ongoing programme of literacy which will become progressively independent of the SIL.

3. "A further indirect result hoped for, as more adults become literate, is a change of attitude towards education, and a lessening of the negative

attitude often found in the rural areas towards enrolling children in the primary schools."

Although the E.Z.E. grant was made for a three-year period, it was not possible for the programmes within the rural communities to be telescoped into significantly less time than the six years originally envisaged, and they have in fact been implemented very much according to the original timetable. This initial assessment of the project was made, therefore, at the expiration of the three years of the grant, which ran from July 1976 to June 1979. (Availability of grant funds has subsequently been extended for programmes which began after 1976.)

Though this report is restricted to the six languages in which the project programmes are most advanced, even so the final phases have been reached in only three of these. (The proposal provided for work to begin later in some languages than in others.) That the six-year cycle is complete, or nearly so, in three languages is due to the fact that the programme for the Bimoba was started in 1972, for the Tampulma in 1973 and for the Vagla in 1975, before the E.Z.E. grant was made.

Before proceeding to a description of the programmes as these have actually taken place, it will be helpful to point out certain factors which have been influential in their development, and are important to an understanding of their rationale.

Fundamental to any programme that seeks to promote literacy in societies where reading and writing is not already an established habit and value is the question "What is the relevance of literacy to daily life?" Literacy is a means to an end, not an end in itself. What is that end, for a pre-literate society? A literacy programme will be successful only if people are motivated by situational relevance.

Some contemporary programmes draw their motivation from a felt need to redress social evils. They incorporate some kind of 'conscientisation', or activity designed to arouse in the programme participants a critical consciousness or awareness of their own ability to act so as to relieve social tensions. Pressure for fundamental readjustment of the sociological situation was not, however, a feature of the language groups served by these programmes, and there was little if any relevance of literacy to such pressures as did exist.

Other programmes have depended on potential economic advantage as a motivational force for literacy, and have gone to considerable length to include practical or functional elements along with literacy instruction. The programmes here studied are not geared primarily to such motivation however for at least two reasons. First, a number of other agencies, both public and private, were already active in a variety of development projects throughout Northern Ghana, so that opportunities for progress of

this kind was already present. Second, it seemed that this motivation was not of sufficient relevance to the individual subsistence farmers who comprised the vast majority of the target population.

A desire to read religious materials, especially the Christian Scriptures, has historically been a major motivation for the spread of literateness in many language groups. Such motivation was potentially present for a small minority of persons in some of these language groups, but it was almost entirely absent in others. It was the personal desire of each SIL worker to facilitate and encourage the reading of mother-tongue Scriptures, but interest in this was not strong enough to be the motivational base of a community-wide literacy programme.

The key motivational factor which was identified by SIL workers was the strong sense of cultural and linguistic identity which these communities enjoyed. Language, kinship, social relationships and local community structure are the fabric of rural life, so that literacy stands its best chance of being adopted if it is perceived as strengthening and enriching these aspects of life. If literacy is introduced by community leaders utilising existing patterns of social relationship, and if it adds to local prestige, it will benefit from the motivational power of local pride and ambition. A programme that maintains and enhances cultural values and status can take advantage of additional motivation from religious, economic and social factors when these are present for some individuals. Without such a culture-supportive context, these factors are likely to be too weak to sustain a community-wide programme, since some of the implications of these very motivations are intuitively recognised to be a threat to existing social structures and cultural norms. The SIL programmes, therefore, have been conceived and implemented as community projects as much as possible. So, too, the language of instruction has been the local one, leading in due course to the national language, rather than the other way about. It is perhaps worth stressing this point. There were sound pedagogical reasons for starting with the completely understood local language rather than the almost unknown national one, but motivational reasons were just as important. If the programme was going to have relevance to the local community and its existing interests and sets of relationships, it had to employ the mother tongue. English is the language of relationships outside the kinship group and beyond the rural living situation, and its use as the language of initial teaching would have seriously detracted from the programme's relevance to daily life in addition to making learning and teaching much more difficult. (The motivational force that an improved control of English constituted for some persons was, of course, recognised and taken advantage of by the provision for transition into English in the last part of the programmes.)

This reliance upon motivational factors within the existing cultural framework was important not only for the immediate success of the classes but also to the achievement of its long-term aims. Where a community enjoys a stable cultural situation, with change being accepted at a rate which does not prejudice that stability, but where that community is still basically pre-literate, then literacy can become accepted as a community value only if it is relevant and supportive, rather than threatening, to the existing culture. The key to long-term continuance of these programmes was therefore their relevance to and adoption by the communities they served; hence the choice of language, organisational approach, type of materials developed, etc. The hope that short term (six-year) efforts by an organisation very foreign to a local communitiy (SIL) could result in long term and far-reaching changes beneficial to that community (the acceptance of literateness as a value) depends very largely upon cultural sensitivity for its validity.

# Part II
# Details of each literacy programme.

Each of the six literacy programmes which are the subject of this study will be considered under the following headings:

1. The background of the group.
2. An overview of the programme.
3. The results obtained and the problems encountered.

Most of the information presented was gathered by the authors on a visit to Ghana in November 1979. Where subsequent information has been made available this has also been included in the appropriate places. During their visit to Ghana the authors researched reports sent regularly to the SIL director in Tamale, interviewed SIL staff and in some cases met with the literacy supervisors from the language groups. Subsequently they had the draft reports checked for accuracy and requested additional information from the SIL members involved in each of the programmes. The willing cooperation of all involved has greatly facilitated this study.

At a surface level, all of the programmes have much in common. The language groups are all located in somewhat similar terrain in both the Northern Region and the Upper Region of the country. All the participants are subsistence farmers living in areas where lack of rainfall often adversely affects the crops and jeopardises food supplies. However the economic base varies somewhat from group to group, and some have greater opportunity of growing a cash crop.

Sociologically the groups differ significantly despite their similarity. Some are larger than others and have not been subject to the suzerainty of other groups. They maintain strong patterns of local leadership and are proud of their language, welcoming its development and use in a written form. Others have less leadership, a lower self-image and an uncertain attitude to the benefits of literacy in their mother tongue, even if this may eventually lead them to a knowledge of spoken and written English.

Attitudes to formal schooling have varied from group to group. Some have embraced opportunities for education and given priority to sending their children to school, while in other areas almost no interest has been exhibited in public schooling. Attitudes to the translated Scriptures varied also. In some groups this became a major motivation for learning to read, while in others such an interest was completely lacking. The difference in the way the various programmes have developed can be accounted for largely by sociological factors. The key to motivation, the essential element in any programme, has also varied. Discovering the key has in some cases required years of village living and interaction with the local people by the SIL workers, while in others it has been more readily apparent.

The programmes are presented one at a time. The Bimoba is reported first in some detail and is to be regarded as representative of the others. The other programmes are then described, chiefly in terms of the points in which they vary from the Bimoba, in order to avoid unproductive repetition.

## The Bimoba Programme

*1. Background of the language group.*

The Bimobas in Ghana live in the northeastern part of the country along the Ghana-Togo border. (A considerable number live in Togo, but have not been affected by the present programme.) The largest number is found in the South Mamprusi Council District of the Northern Region. It is estimated (from the 1960 and 1970 census results) that the Bimobas of this district number approximately 35,000 at present. It is in this district that the programme took place.

The Bimoba traditional area extends northward into the Kusasi local Council District of the Upper Region, where approximately 17,400 additional Bimobas reside.

The language is classified linguistically as Eastern Moore—Gurma, Central Gur.

There is a good truck road to Bunkpurugu which is the administrative center and border town of the area. This is open most of the year and greatly facilitates access and promotes trade. There are several truck owners in Bunkpurugu and these trucks provide transport for cargo and people.

The climate of the region is one of a rainy season of approximately five months, characterised by periodic heavy rainfall, followed by a dry season in which there is virtually no precipitation. The Bimoba area is even less well-served than most of the rest of the region for water supply in the dry season. Farmers have to work long hours in the rainy season to grow enough food to see the family through the year. The dry season is therefore traditionally set aside for craftwork, particularly the building of houses, and social obligations. The main crops grown are millet, guinea corn and maize. Unlike some other areas of the north there is no substantial cash crop to provide money income. There are however local

markets throughout the region where surplus food is sold. Goats, chicken and guinea fowl provide a meagre supply of protein food.

As a border town, Bunkpurugu has an official presence of police and some military. The majority of the townspeople are Bimobas whose language is predominant in the market and home. Bimobas have a reputation for hard work and are often sought after in other parts of Ghana. Their compounds are well built and attractive, and people show a pride in their language and work.

Bimoba society is organised under a strong paramount chief who lives at Bunkpurugu and holds the respect of his people. Disputes are settled first at the village level by village chiefs and then, if necessary, cases are brought to the paramount chief. Difficult cases can be referred to a government court. The paramount chief rules by consensus and is surrounded by elders on whose counsel he depends. He takes the initiative in introducing innovations and in representing the needs of his people to government officials.

Schools were first opened in 1948. There are now 28 primary schools and five middle schools. The majority of the children in the villages have the same mother tongue, but there is some multilingualism in the main centres. Almost all the teachers are Bimobas.

Mr. J. Achirifa, the present literacy supervisor, estimated that about a thousand Bimobas knew how to read before the literacy programme began. He also estimated that about two hundred may have had secondary school training, and about eight had been to college. It was from this body of literates and semiliterates that the first volunteer teachers were drawn.

A Baptist mission hospital serves the whole northern area and is situated at Nalerigu about 40 miles from Bunkpurugu. There are two clinics in the area, one run by the Department of Social Welfare at Bunkpurugu. The other is a mission clinic specially for mothers and babies at Nakpanduri. Missions have been at work in the area for many years and today there are some forty churches of various denominations among the Bimobas. Agricultural help is available through missions and other agencies.

There are a number of reasons why interest in vernacular literacy spread quite rapidly. The programme was sponsored by the paramount chief who apparently saw it as a means by which adults who had not been able to benefit from the school system could gain some education. To some extent it was seen as a bridge into the national language, English. Mr. Achirifa thought that the novelty of being able to read Bimoba aroused interest in the classes and also that the opportunity of writing letters for themselves, rather than being dependent on others, provided an incentive. Many of the Bimobas who had received an education had left

the area for work in the cities, so ability to communicate with distant relatives was highly valued

Initially there was some small interest by one of the church groups in reading the translated Scriptures and this too proved a motivating factor for some to attend class.

*2. Overview of the programme.*

In 1963, Institute of Linguistics worker Miss G. G. Jacobs began research among the Bimobas. She learned the language and formulated an alphabet which was later approved by the Bureau of Ghana Languages. A number of linguistic papers and educational materials including primers were printed. In 1971, a reading primer 'Introductory Bimoba for Schools' was approved by the Ministry of Education for use in public schools.

Miss Jacobs wanted the benefits of literacy to be available to all sections of the Bimoba people. She approached the paramount chief at Bunkpurugu and he approved the idea of the literacy programme. He also took active steps to promote it by sending word to the seven nearest villages telling them about the programme and asking them each to select two teachers who could be trained to teach in it. The literacy classes were under the general supervision of the village chiefs from the beginning as well as having the paramount chief's sponsorship, and this encouraged people to attend the classes. The first classes were held in these villages in 1972. Mr. Y. Utan, a university graduate and teacher, provided the help needed to organise the programme, train the teachers, write some of the stories for the primer and some easy reading books for post-primer reading. He was employed as the first supervisor. His creativity in writing, teacher training and organisation was outstanding and provided the impetus needed for the programme to be successful.

At first the expenses for the programme were met by Miss Jacobs, the SIL worker, but costs were such that this was too much to support from personal funds. She received help from church groups in England and later the Canadian International Development Agency also contributed funds.

According to a report by Mr. A. J. Naden, an SIL member who made some evaluation of the programme in its early years, the aims of the programme at its inception were stated as follows:

a. to promote amongst the people some interest and pride in their own language and tradition;

b. to make it possible for Bimobas who had not the means, ability or inclination for extensive education to attain at least basic literacy and to make use of the Scriptural and other materials in Bimoba published under the auspices of the Institute of Linguistics;

c. to help those who had missed or failed to complete their schooling to advance as far into education as their time, ability and interest might permit;

d. to cooperate with the Ministry of Education in the promotion of the teaching of vernacular languages in the schools;

The principles on which the programme was set up were as follows:

a. no potential student should be debarred by impossible demands on his time or finances;

b. as far as possible and consistent with the principle just mentioned above, use should be made of local personnel and other resources;

c. teachers should work on a voluntary and spare time basis;

d. teachers should be given full training and helped by cooperation and supervision;

e. the programme should avoid any elaborate equipment which would not be practical for future continuation and extension of the scheme.

A specific numerical objective of one thousand persons reading and writing the Bimoba language was set, this number being regarded as sufficient to develop a positive attitude to literacy, and to be an adequate basis for an ongoing programme. It was also hoped that literacy would have an effect on the community as a whole, improving their standards of living, health and general welfare.

From the beginning the programme has depended upon the positive support of the paramount chief and his village chiefs and headmen. It was with their approval that suitable teachers from their villages were selected and sent for teacher training. They found places to hold classes and settle disputes among students or between classes. The project was planned as a series of evening classes for adults taught by local volunteers under the care of local supervisors. These were men chosen for their leadership qualities and ability to handle literacy skills in Bimoba and teach these to others.

As the programme progressed and enthusiasm among the students continued to rise, three levels of achievement were provided for.

Level One covered the two basic primers, introducing the students to all the elements in the written language and teaching the basic skills of reading and writing.

Level Two covered the teaching of a number of reading books written by the Supervisor on a variety of subjects. Students gained greater fluency and learned to take dictation and write with greater ease.

Level Three covered the reading of more difficult material and story writing.

Materials to bridge into English were planned to follow Level Three.

Owing to the unexpected early withdrawal of the SIL worker, this was not implemented.

Teachers chosen from each of the villages came to Bunkpurugu for a two-week training course. Because a minimum level of education was necessary, in the beginning all the teachers had to have received some education in the schools. Subsequently some of the teachers were recruited from the ranks of the literacy classes. The literacy instructors included school teachers, school graduates and one or two senior boys still attending school. The scope of the training course according to Naden's report was:

a. reading, writing and speaking in Bimoba;

b. a method for teaching the primers (i.e., syllable drills) and a method for teaching writing;

c. use of cards, pictures, and games to reinforce teaching;

d. use of the blackboard;

e. teaching directly from a book without other aids, i.e., pointing to words, phrases or parts of words in individual books;

f. discussion of practical ways for the teachers to control and encourage classes of adults. (See also the appendix for additional information.)

Two or more teachers were assigned to each class and were expected to teach three evenings a week. Sometimes the work was shared between the teachers, each taking one evening. At other times they supported each other at each class, and gave more individual attention to the students. Records of attendance and achievement were kept by each teacher, and students were not finally enrolled until they had attended for three weeks to show they were serious in attendance and participation.

Much of the early organisation originated from Mr. Utan who had been a primary school teacher. He and his assistant Mr. Achirifa themselves taught classes Monday, Wednesday and Friday and visited other classes meeting on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. They systematically visited these to encourage, help and evaluate. They demonstrated points of teaching, checked records, and encouraged inexperienced teachers. They always reported progress and problems to the local chiefs. The record cards kept by the supervisors took the form of a weekly report showing attendance, progress through the primers, and grading the class for keenness, reading, writing and dictation ability and test scores. Teachers were also graded for keeness, punctuality, preparation and use of aids, use of the teacher's manual, teaching of new syllables and words, teaching the story, writing, dictation and encouragement to students.

As the programme progressed Mr. Utan left and Mr. Achirifa became the head supervisor. He has remained in this position until now. Another assistant was appointed to help him. As numbers increased, the supervisors could no longer teach classes themselves and needed first bicycles

and then motorbikes to travel to the distant villages. Supervision was full time work, and these men were paid out of project funds. Mr. Utan and Mr. Achirifa have also been responsible for much of the post-primer literature and for the editing of the newssheets.

Classes were held in the dry season when work on the farms was less pressing and the people had more leisure time. The season ended with a Literacy Day when certificates to succcessful students were awarded.

Reciprocation is an important element in Bimoba society. Job satisfaction from voluntary teaching required some kind of reward. As the programme progressed, the role of the teacher became somewhat prestigious, especially when they were honored at public gatherings like Literacy Days. In the early stages it was felt necessary to give occasional gifts in kind to the teachers in the form of sacks of millet. Prestige was increased by gifts of shirts of a special colour that made the teacher stand out in his community and gave his role special dignity. Some gifts were presented on the Literacy Days, the cost of these being borne by the project.

The classes attracted more men and boys than women and girls. So in 1974–75 four women's classes, with a combined enrolment of 48, commenced. Some of these women became teachers, but it has been difficult to keep the literacy rate for women on the same level as for men.

See Table II (below) for the progression in the number of classes.

The Bimoba programme was the first to get under way. Because Miss Jacobs did not return after her home leave in 1975, it has had less direct supervision from SIL personnel than the others. It is gratifying to note that the programme has continued to expand and has become a valued institution in Bimoba society.

During 1978–79 another SIL field worker spent a year in the area to help the programme move into a phase of complete independence. He organised the supervision of the programme so that eight voluntary supervisors were responsible for their local areas. This relieved the chief supervisor so that he could write more of the literature that was needed for the programme and for the literate community that now exists.

The two basic primers were lent to the students of each class, and were designed with hard plastic covers to withstand repeated use. Later editions were sold, rather than lent. Students were expected to buy all post-primer books. Illustrations in the primers were prepared for two purposes: 1) to act as memory aids for the key words taught in the lessons, and 2) to decorate and enliven the appearance of the books. The latter aspect was much appreciated by the students, and it appears that even the unsophisticated and elderly could recognise the items depicted. Because of the interest in letter writing, several of the lessons centered around this skill. Students were responsible for buying their own pencils

and notebooks. Blackboards, chalk and teaching materials were given to the teacher, but remained the property of the programme.

The following were the materials used in the programme.

## Table I—Reading Materials in Bimoba

| *Pedagogical materials* | *Comments* |
|---|---|
| Primer I | Loaned to students |
| Primer II | Loaned to students |
| *Reading Materials* | |
| Folk tales and riddles | |
| The story of Daabir | |
| Health and history—stories | |
| Health book | In preparation in 1979 |
| Marriage customs | ditto |
| Funeral ceremonies | ditto |
| Jungle book | ditto |
| Acts | |
| Moses—books 1 and 2 | |
| John's gospel | |
| *Newssheets* | |
| Some 20 editions of a newssheet have been produced, and sold out, at irregular intervals from 1975-79. | |

The list of materials indicates that the programme did not have a very large body of literature due largely to the fact that Miss Jacobs left unexpectedly. Interest in literacy was maintained, however, and the succession of newssheets that were produced may have been partially responsible. The newssheets were distributed within the area and also sent to Bimobas living outside the area in Accra, Kumasi and Tamale. Considerable support for the programme and some financial aid came from educated and prestigious Bimobas living in these cities as a result. The newssheets were sold at cost.

Three Literacy Days were held in 1974, 1975 and 1976 and have been important focal points in the programme. They were held at the end of the dry season before the planting began and marked the conclusion of lessons for that year. These celebrations did much to stimulate enthusiasm and give publicity to the programme both among the Bimoba themselves and also among visiting local and district officials who were invited to attend.

The chief function of these occasions was to honour the students who had successfully passed tests in reading and were eligible for certificates.

Teachers and supervisors also received honour through speeches and the opportunity of presenting their students to the assembly, as well as through special gifts they received for their service. The villages from whom the classes came were often asked to present dances and drumming and this honoured them. The paramount chief and elders welcomed the opportunity to present the needs of their locality to the invited officials during the speeches. The ceremony, therefore, had a far wider significance than just the giving of certificates, attracting up to two thousand people. Enthusiasm for literacy always increased following these occasions and requests came for more classes in other villages.

Among the guests who were invited to Bunkpurugu for the celebration were officials from the department of Social Welfare and Community Development, the Commissioner of Police, the Regional Commissioner, officials from the Baptist Hospital, local pastors, and other officials. Some would be asked to make speeches and replies would be given by the paramount chief and the supervisor. The most notable occasion was when the Regional Commissioner attended and arrived in a helicopter. On that occasion the paramount chief welcomed his honored guest with the following speech. Its content and emphasis demonstrate the close association of the literacy programme with other aspects of progress desired by the community.

> "Mr. Chairman, the Regional Commissioner, Distinguished Guests, Chiefs, Ladies and Gentlemen. I have the greatest pleasure in announcing this is the third time the Regional Commissioner has kindly expressed his desire of being among us and this depicts the sort of attention and interest he has in us. His presence does not only inspire us in our literacy drive but also in many fields like self-help projects of various types. Mr. Chairman, I wish to present the following points to the Regional Commissioner for solution.
>
> a. We kindly appeal to him to see to it that the Health Centre is opened before the rest of the quarters are built.
> b. Since there is an acute water shortage, bore holes would be of the greatest help to us now.
> c. On sanitation, the number of latrines are very negligible throughout the Bimoba-Konkomba areas. They have remained almost the same number since 1962–66 when they were built. This was a separate district during that period.
> d. We will also kindly ask him to consider and approve the following as feeder roads. We are always ready to supplement Government help.

1) Bunkpurugu through Kampaga to Nakpanduri road (under 48km);
2) Bunkpurugu–Kinkangu road (under 7km);
3) Bunkpurugu–Bunbuna road (under 16km);
4) Bunkpurugu through Gbinghanni to Wencheki (this is particularly economically viable) (under 48km);
5) Najong No.1–Kambatiak (under 7km).

e. We also need the extension of the omnibus service to reach us here. This will help ease the transportation difficulties in this area.

f. There is also need for an Information Centre—this will really promote the activities of the literacy drive in this area and keep us abreast of Government efforts and all that is happening.

g. Last but not least is the request for a separate District Council, which will not only afford us the opportunity of using our large revenue to develop our area but will also enable us to do such things as maintain our schools and market places.

"On behalf of the chiefs and elders and on behalf of the Bimoba Konkomba Youth Association and the Institute of Linguistics, I welcome you to Bunkpurugu."

*3. Results and problems.*

The Bimoba programme has met with considerable success and has apparently brought about some positive changes in society that are unlikely to be reversed. The following chart shows the growth of the programme and illustrates the increasing interest in reading from many villages. The information was obtained from the reports of Mr. Leonhard and Mr. Achirifa.

## Table II—Bimoba Programme

| School Year(s) | Number of Classes | Number of Teachers | Number of Students | Certificates Awarded |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1972-73 | 9 | 15 | 108 | 47 |
| 1973-74 | 17 | 38 | 260 | 120 |
| 1973-74 | 37 | 68 | 793 | 500+ |
| 1975-77 | 53 | 86 | 900 | 598 |
| 1977-78 | 143 | not available | 1539 | not available |
| 1977-78 | 114 | 102 | 1622 | 1040 first level<br>200 second level<br>90 third level |

The benefit to the community has extended far beyond the increased ability to read Bimoba. Schools have recognised the value of beginning

education in the vernacular and have encouraged their students to purchase the primers. These were reported in use in all the primary schools of the region. Ninety-two graduates of the literacy programme entered public school to get further education. The average age of these students was approximately 10.5 years upon entrance into the government schools and they were able to begin their studies one year and a half above students entering without project experience. They are all in the upper 25% of their class, scholastically.

Enthusiasm for the programme remains high. In an interview with Mr. Achirifa he reported that he had a constant demand for classes in spite of the fact that the primers needed a new edition and he had none to sell to the teachers. He had requests from the last remaining area of Bimoba people on the Ghana side of the border and planned to begin classes there as soon as books were available.

Fifty-four of the teachers in the literacy programme had had no previous exposure to education and were graduates of the course. Five of these went on to formal school.

Mr. Achirifa reported that there is high interest in the newssheets. He had more articles to print than he could use. Writers left articles with him to be included in a subsequent issue. Copies of the paper were often sold before he had a chance to distribute them beyond Bunkpurugu.

Several of the villages improved the roads to their locations so that the supervisors could use their motorcycles to reach them. Some villages built their own schoolhouse for the programme. An agricultural worker in the area reported that villages where literacy classes had been opened were more receptive to new ideas concerning fertilisers.

SIL member Mr. B. Leonhard who helped in the transfer of the project to Bimoba control in 1978–79, reported a number of problems that the programme has encountered.

The main cultural hindrance to the greater expansion of the programme has been the attitude in some areas that literacy is just for males. In 1975 the paramount chief, recognising this tendency, encouraged the starting of classes for women in Bunkpurugu and sent his wives to them. Even this was not sufficient to overcome the cultural barriers to women's education. Mr. Achirifa felt that this was not an insuperable problem, but would need to be handled culturally by women teaching women, and by a publicity effort to persuade communities that women should attend the classes.

From the onset of the programme, teacher satisfaction has been a problem. This was dealt with initially by gifts of shirts and grain, but subsequently these had to be dropped for lack of funds. Had there been more literacy days to give public recognition to the teachers this would probably have relieved the problem to some degree. There were several

causes for teacher attrition. Some took further education or trained as teachers in the government schools. Some were appointed to a government post, and still others traveled south looking for paying jobs. On occasion, a class had advanced students who continued the teaching responsibilities as best they could. At other times the class simply stopped. Adequate record keeping has been frustrated by these constant changes in staff. Sometimes the teachers have taken the records with them and at other times they have been lost.

With the departure of Miss Jacobs, the programme lost on-the-spot supervisory and consultant help. Important matters had to be discussed by mail with the SIL administration in Tamale, or involved a trip which was expensive both in time and money.

The economic difficulties that the country of Ghana has been experiencing during the last few years have affected the programme. There has been great difficulty in obtaining supplies of kerosene and lanterns and of exercise books and pencils; all have become exceedingly expensive. A search for these essential items has led to many expensive trips into Tamale. Exercise books have had to be bought in bulk in Accra and then sent north. The same problems have occurred with the bicycles and small motorcycles. Repairs and replacements plus fuel for the motorcycles have been a constant problem.

Another serious problem arising from the economic state of the country has been the difficulty in printing books. Materials that were submitted for printing have often been delayed for months through lack of electricity and supplies.

Inaccessibility of the villages has remained a problem. Some villages have no roads and supervisors have to stay overnight when they visit. Many Bimobas lack money and find it difficult to pay even a modest price for books, and this has led to buying on credit and inevitable loss due to default on payments.

In view of these major difficulties and particularly the small amount of literature available, it is surprising that the Bimoba programme has been as successful as it has. During 1980 it received limited financial support from the Canadian University Service Overseas, and the following extract from a letter to the SIL director from the CUSO co-director dated December 22, 1980 provides confirmation of the programme's success.

> Following our meeting in Tamale last month I visited the Bimoba Literacy Project and reviewed the progress of that project. I met with the project co-ordinator Achirifa Saana and also with several representatives of the executive committee of the Bimoba Literacy Group.

From my discussions with Achirifa, Tshombe, several of the headteachers and the Bunkpurugu Chief, along with my review of the records of attendance and student progress within the project, together with visits in several village groups, I was able to conclude that over the past 12 months the project has continued to make a substantial contribution to the development of literacy skills in the area. Moreover, the various village level literacy groups are beginning to identify and undertake small scale community development projects such as feeder road construction, school building construction, and well-digging. The literacy training is proving to be both a spiritually and physically helpful process to the Bimoba people. I would expect that the preparation of additional reading materials would further facilitate the functional aspects of the project.

Without feeling too proud I think we (Institute of Linguistics, Bimoba Literacy Group and CUSO) can say that the handover to self-sufficiency although not yet fully completed, is well on its way. A self-managing structure has been set-up. Collective decision making, and shared community responsibility for the operation of the programme is now a fact. Time will tell the rest but I personally feel confident of their success."

This comment from a qualified observer is valuable confirmation of the picture presented by those who have been involved in the programme.

## The Tampulma Programme.

*1. Background of the language group.*

The Tampulma people live mainly in the Northern Region in the Damongo District north of Daboya, and in the Gambaga District around Langbinsi, mid-way between Walewale and Gambaga. There are fifteen villages in the Daboya area and five in the Gambaga District. Although the Tampulmas are not listed separately in the 1970 census figures, estimates based upon the information given for individual villages in the 1960 and 1970 census give an approximate total figure of 8,000. The language is classified linguistically as Grusi, Central Gur.

Traditionally the Tampulmas lived in the Daboya District. They were noted warriors and the Mamprusi from the Gambaga area appealed to them for help against insurgents who were threatening them. The Tampulmas responded, came to their help and then remained in the area. By 1957 some wished to return to their homeland and resettle. Today, therefore, they are found in two distinct locations but continue to have contact.

The villages in the Gambaga District were mixed. Intermarriage with other language groups and a Mamprusi presence made them linguistically complex communities. Many of the chiefs were Moslem, although most of the villagers followed their traditional beliefs. There was a small Christian church in the area. The villages in the Daboya region were more homogeneous both in language and beliefs, and there was a small church at Lingbinsi.

The soil is fertile and crops grow well. These include groundnuts, yams, maize, guinea corn, cassava, sweet potatoes and a small amount of other vegetables and fruit including tomatoes and okra. The usual domestic animals are kept, including guinea fowl, chickens, goats and sheep. One of the chief grievances of the Daboya area is the poor state of the bush road that connects eleven villages, making it impossible for trucks to

bring out the harvest for sale. The Tampulma people have repeatedly tried to get help in improving this road and constructing the bridges over the water courses, but without success.

There is no one paramount chief among the Tampulma. Each of the areas functions independently of the other under a leading chief, and both are under the suzerainty of neighbouring groups. In the Daboya area they recognise the Gonjas and in the Gambaga the Mamprusi. Each village has its own chief and elders and there is a clan system which spreads over both areas. There is a healthy competitive spirit between the clans. In large villages the teachers taught their own clan members but where the villages were small they were content to learn together.

Before the literacy programme began there were three primary schools in the Daboya area and one in the Gambaga area. Several schools had closed because of lack of support. A local pastor could think of very few students who had gone through the middle school before the literacy programme began. Three had however gone through University. One had become a headmaster, one a pharmacist and one was working in insurance. As in other programmes the first teachers were drawn from those who had some education in primary or middle school.

There was little motivation for vernacular literacy initially. In the years prior to the programme, interest in education had waned: school attendance was low. Tampulmas were discontent with the education system where few succeeded in graduating and those who did left the district for work in the cities.

In contrast to the government schools, the literacy classes were under the authority of the village chiefs and this made the operation less threatening and relieved the fears that graduates of the programme would desert the area. The change of geographical location involved in the return to traditional territory in the Daboya area may have made those concerned more open to other forms of change. A key factor, however, seems to have been the very gradual approach of the SIL team, with its built-in reassurance concerning the possibility of success and its creation of strong trust relationships and partnership bonds. The association of literacy with the Christian Scriptures was another positive influence in this case, and one which grew stronger as the programme gathered momentum.

*2. Overview of the Programme.*

SIL members Mr. and Mrs. I. Gray began work in the Tampulma area in 1967. By 1973 primers and initial reading materials had been tested with individuals and used in trial classes. Teachers were not, however, called from each village to come to a central location for training. Motivation for

literacy was so low and the authority structure so weak, that this approach was not likely to succeed. Instead the SIL team personally visited villages and taught classes. When interest had been aroused and some students were making good progress, the most able ones were selected and trained as teachers. This was done with the advice of the village chiefs. These men continued teaching when the Grays moved on to another village. Teacher training was very informal at this stage, but it was effective as the prospective teachers first taught under close supervision, copying from a good model. Since most of the teachers of the first classes had had some schooling in English, they found the transfer to Tampulma fairly simple.

The project began in 1973 in the villages north of Daboya. Funds initially came from churches and interested friends and later the project participated in the E.Z.E. grant and became part of the Northern Ghana Literacy Project. By 1974 the programme spread to the Gambaga area and by 1975 covered most of the villages in both regions with often more than one class in a village.

As in other projects, all teachers were volunteers. There were some incentives for the teachers and for the classes in the early stages. Teachers were given clothes and soap and were lent tapes occasionally. Classes that completed the primer series were given a playback machine and one tape of Scripture. However, once the programme was well established, these reinforcements were discontinued as unnecessary. This was especially true in some cases where the people decided that they would form churches and reading activities continued within this framework. There are four levels of instruction in this programme. Transition to English was at the fourth level. The SIL team prepared tapes and books to help in both oral and written English. Approximately 100 students took the English course but it lost momentum when the soaring cost of batteries made it difficult for the classes to continue. Mrs. Gray reported that as the vernacular literacy gained momentum this provided more and more personal satisfaction.

The objective of the programme was to produce 700–1000 literates and leave behind an ongoing programme. The SIL team did much of the teaching initially and used a variety of teaching aids. Local teachers found these too difficult to handle so they were reduced to a blackboard and chalk, posters and flashcards of the first primer, exercise books and pencils.

A four-week training course for teachers was held in 1974. Much of this time was spent in developing the literacy skills of the prospective teachers as well as teaching them to handle a class and the primers. Training courses were also held after Literacy Days, both for new teachers and to up-grade existing teachers. These lasted approximately four days.

Mr. A. Manga, the chief supervisor who was appointed in 1974, was relatively well educated, having completed middle school. The assistant supervisors for the Gambaga and Daboya areas had started, but not completed middle school.

All teacher training was conducted by the supervisors by 1978, at which time the SIL team withdrew from the programme.

In 1977 a Literacy Committee was set up comprising the three supervisors and some educated Tampulmas. The objectives of this group were to promote literacy and specify what literature should be published. They also appear to have promoted community welfare and development to some degree by doing such things as sending round to the villages asking the chiefs to clean them up and to see that stagnant water was not left around the houses and that babies were taken to the hospital before they became too ill to travel.

The committee also decided that the senior supervisor Abraham Manga should continue in his responsibilities. When funds from the literacy grant ceased they decided that he should receive compensation from the students who would each pay a small sum for the maintenance of his bicycle and that villagers in his village would help him with his groundnut farm. This did not work out as planned but as of February, 1981 Mr. Manga was still continuing in his role.

There were three Literacy Days in both areas which were attended by not only Tampulmas but also by the Mamprusi and the Gonjas. As in the other programmes they were major events that promoted and publicised the literacy programme.

The titles produced and used in the four levels of the programme are listed in Table III.

*3. Results and problems.*

This was one of the two early programmes, beginning in 1973. Like the Bimoba programme it served to some degree as a model for subsequent efforts. The results have not only been satisfying from the view point of the students who have learned to read but also from the effect the programme has had on attitudes to education, health and community life. As in other programmes where the group has had an inferior status in relation to surrounding groups and is under the suzerainty of a more powerful one, the Tampulmas have found in vernacular literacy an avenue of self-expression and self-awareness that has led to them taking initiative in areas that they had not previously tried.

The statistics available for classes and teachers in the Daboya area are given in Table IV.

## Table III—Reading Materials in Tampulma

| *Pedagogical materials* | *Number published* |
|---|---|
| Preprimer | |
| Primer 1, 2, 3 | 1500 each |
| *Transition into English* | |
| Books and tapes | |
| *Reading materials* | |
| How cocoa came to Ghana | 500 |
| Folktales | 1500 |
| How to care for your body | 500 |
| Flies are your enemies | 500 |
| Book on eyes | 500 |
| Book on food | 500 |
| Creation story | 500 |
| Life of Jesus, Books 1-6 | 300 each |
| Moses | 500 |
| Joseph | 500 |
| Abraham | 500 |
| New Testament | 250 sold |

Newssheets have been produced perodically.

The statistics available for classes and teachers in the Daboya area are shown in Table IV.

## Table IV—Tampulma Programme

| School Year(s) | Villages with Classes | Number of Teachers | Number of Students | Number of Supervisors |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1973-74 | 4 | | 40 | 2 |
| 1974-75 | 11 | | 160 | 2 |
| 1975-76 | 17 | 30 | 314 | 2 |
| 1976-77 | 17 | 40 | 300 | 2 |
| 1977-78 | 17 | 45 | 460 | 3 |
| 1978-79 | 17 | 50 | 500 | 3 |

The total number of certificates awarded since the beginning of the programme is 950.

Details from the Gambaga District are not available.

The villages in the Daboya area collected a large sum of money and requested the local officials to help them improve the road so they could bring their produce out to the market. This was not achieved, but it showed community effort and the failure of the project was due to factors outside local control. The Tampulmas no longer consider themselves to be uneducated, but think of themselves as on a par with other peoples in the area. Mrs. Gray considered this the most important effect the programme had on the community. Recent communication from Ghana suggests that four years after the SIL team withdrew, 300 students are in classes in the Daboya area. No word has come from the Gambaga area. The programme was never so strong in that area. This was probably due to the mixed villages and the fact that the Scriptures were not such a motivation to learn to read in this area where there were Muslim chiefs. It is likely that literacy is continuing in the church in that area, however.

# The Vagla Programme

*1. Background of the language group.*

The major Vagla community is located 112 miles west of Tamale and covers an area of approximately 500 square miles. There are some 7,000 speakers living in thirteen villages, nine of which are accessible by car for most of the year; all are accessible by motorbike except during the worst part of the rainy season. The Vagla language is one of the Gur Grusi group.

The principal occupation is subsistence farming of products such as millet, yams, guinea corn, corn, beans, okra, groundnuts and peppers. Each person plants primarily for his own family, with if possible some extra for market sale. The sale of locally made items provides a limited means of earning some additional money.

Members of extended families or clans have separate dwellings very close together and joined by one common roof. This is flat and provides a thoroughfare from one part of the compound to another. Access to the roof top and to the rest of the village is by notched tree trunks from the courtyards. The rooftops provide opportunity for as much social activity as the courtyards below. There are usually two or three extended family groups in a village numbering 500.

Each roof area usually constitutes a clan and might be made up of as many as thirty houses joined together. There is much fear attached to going to live in another 'roof' or leaving the area at night, because the person is going outside the safety of the kinship group. There is also fear of witchcraft.

Vaglas live according to traditional patterns, supplying their own needs for food and social well-being. However, crowded housing conditions lead to the rapid spread of disease, and poor understanding of nutrition results in a high infant mortality rate. Some of the protein available in animal

foods is lost to the community through sacrifices to the spirits. This can be a serious loss where protein foods are scarce.

There is no paramount chief among the Vaglas although a certain amount of rivalry exists between the chiefs of the three leading villages for such a position. The Vaglas are under the suzerainty of the Gonjas, a larger neighboring language group. They pay tribute and perform ceremonial rites for them and a Gonja chief has traditionally lived in each Vagla village. Partly because of this and partly because they are few in number, the Vagla have had a very low self-image, were slow to accept outside innovation and clung to their own language and culture.

One of the most important structures in Vagla society is the kinship system of government. Clan headmen and senior elders are responsible for the conduct of their clan members, and the loyalty of the members is primarily to their own clan headman. A group of clans form a village with a village chief, who is very dependent on his elders and rarely makes an important decision without consulting them.

There have been schools in the area since 1963. There are primary schools in five villages and primary and middle schools in three others. Only about 10% of the school age children attend these schools and the drop-out rate is high. Less than one percent of the population have received middle school education and very few have gone on to tertiary studies. It is estimated that only one percent were literate before the project began, and there were approximately 17 literates and semiliterates who were available to help teach.

Like many other minority groups in northern Ghana, the Vagla people resist change and many resent losing the help of their children in the fields. They likewise resist a system of education that takes those who are successful away from their villages to the towns. There was practically no motivation for literacy or change of any kind when the SIL workers first began their studies. It took many years of motivating activities to get the programme started.

*2. Overview of the Programme.*

SIL began linguistic investigation among the Vaglas in 1963, principally by Miss M. Crouch, who lived in the village of Jentilpe. She analysed the language, gave it an alphabet and studied the grammar. She also began to translate the New Testament into the Vagla language. By 1975 she had also tested and revised the orthography and prepared the present literacy materials with the help of other members of SIL.

The first trial class was held in 1968 when an SIL worker was assigned to work in literacy but there was only a poor response. Very few were interested enough to persist with the classes which she taught and none

were interested in training to teach their own people. After this unsuccessful attempt to stir enthusiasm, greater attention was given to the local authority structure and a concerted effort was made to interest the village chiefs and elders. Mr. J. Kpaga, a former school teacher, who spoke both Vagla and English, was employed to assist with linguistic analysis and translation. In 1970, with his assistance, the chiefs and elders of Jentilpe were gathered together and presented with the advantages of literacy in their language for their people. Interest was sparked and Mr. Kpaga taught a couple of reading classes, one for the children and one for men. A few elders were taught individually. At the end of the literacy season a brief ceremony was held and a few people received literacy certificates. In no way, however, could it be said that Vagla people in general were interested in literacy.

In January 1973 Miss P. Herbert took the place of the previous SIL literacy worker. She worked in the neighboring village of Tuna for some time and interest was such that she was able to teach a class of fifty boys. This began to generate considerable interest. Mr. Kpaga now visited all the villages, explaining literacy to the chiefs, and playing tape recordings of the translated Scriptures in the Vagla language.

Throughout this period easy reading materials on various topics were being written with Mr. Kpaga's help, preparing for a major literacy thrust. In 1975 Mr. E. Addai was appointed as an assistant literacy supervisor. In order to stir up motivation further and gain goodwill and support of the chiefs and elders, the whole team stayed for several weeks in key villages, teaching classes and generating interest. Even after this, frequent visits were made to the villages prior to starting the major programme. Also, posters in Vagla and English with colourful illustrations were displayed in each village. The chiefs were asked to provide data for a book that was to be written about Vagla history, and they responded positively to this suggestion.

The major literacy programme was launched in 1975 after many such visits to the chiefs. At this time they were asked to choose two suitable men of the right age and calibre to be sent to Jentilpe for the initial teacher training course. Seniority is very important in the culture and special care had to be taken in the choice of teachers for the older men. To be taught by someone younger than themselves would cause loss of face. It was also found necessary to train teachers from each clan, as fear and reproach resulted if teachers crossed clan borders.

In most cases the choice of teacher was a good one. Often the one chosen was related to a village chief himself. The village classes and teachers were put firmly under the control of the chief. When complaints or queries arose, the team referred these to the chief. This proved very helpful and in one case in particular, when a tape recorder that had been

lent to a certain village was lost, the chief himself paid for a replacement.

Whenever a supervision trip was made to a village, the chief was contacted first and he called the teacher to give an account of his class and hand over the money for the books. Every letter to communicate a major decision about classes or courses was addressed to the chief of each village. They were all invited, and often transported, to Jentilpe for the Literacy Days, so their presence not only gave dignity to the occasion, but also emphasised that the programme was with the blessing and under the control of the traditional leaders. One of the chiefs himself received a certificate on one of these occasions; later, he received a second certificate for advanced reading.

The objectives of the programme were to make 500 Vaglas literate in four years, to provide transition classes into English for any who wanted them, and to leave behind an ongoing programme. It was also hoped that as a result of the programme there would be evidenced an overall improvement in the standard of living.

The whole programme from the beginning was carried out with the cooperation and approval of the Department for Social Welfare and Community Development. Representatives from this body were often present at Literacy Days and provided certificates and special badges for the teachers and helped to award certificates and prizes to the successful students. There were two other national bodies that gave their approval to the programme. One was the District Chief Executive Officer who promised to supply kerosene to the classes at the government controlled price, when fuel at a reasonable price was hard to obtain. The other was the Bureau of Ghana Languages which approved the primers for use in the schools on an experimental basis.

Money for the supervisors' salaries came from the project fund together with that for books, transportation, blackboards, chalk, etc. Students paid for their own books and writing materials, although these were subsidized. Kerosene lanterns were sold to the teachers and each class was responsible for providing the oil for the lamps.

Village chiefs allocated areas for the classes, and teachers were answerable to them for discipline and organisation. Teachers were volunteers but gained status in their villages by the recognition of the chiefs and in the wider community when they received awards on Literacy Days. They also received bonus gifts of soap and rice in the early days, and later there were opportunities to buy soap, matches, diaries, calendars, etc. from time to time. A popular incentive was the distinctive uniform which was given each year to mark them out as teachers. The supervisors also received special clothing for this purpose. Gradually both teachers and supervisors were encouraged to pay more and more towards the cost of their uniforms until eventually they would be prepared to provide their

own. A Honda motorbike and a Mobylette were used by the chief supervisor and his assistant respectively while the other two assistant supervisors used bicycles for supervision of classes.

The project started on a large scale in 1975 with an initial teacher training course, with seventeen teachers attending from eleven villages. Two villages did not choose to be represented on this first session. Within six months seventy students had passed tests and had gained certificates.

The course was designed to run only in the six-month dry season when farm work is less and younger men tend to be bored. Each season ended with a Literacy Day when dignitaries, including representatives of the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development, were present.

For the first three years there were two supervisors but, as the work expanded, four were employed. One was full time and three part time. The area was divided into four districts for careful supervision. Each supervisor was responsible for visiting each class twice a month if possible, distributing new books, collecting the money for books sold, helping and encouraging the teachers, and reporting back to the chief supervisor with the book payments once a month.

As in other programmes literacy was divided into four levels. The first level covered the primer series and demonstrated that students had learned to recognise all the basic elements of the language and could build words and could read and write using simple controlled vocabulary. The test included dictation of short words and a reading passage containing only vocabulary with which the student was familiar.

Level two tested further fluency in the language. Students studied ten books and were expected to read more difficult passages and write complete sentences in the test. A further ten books were studied for level three and oral English introduced. A test was given in story writing in Vagla and in answering simple questions in English. Level four included more advanced reading in Vagla and reading and writing in English. The latter covered a vocabulary of 250 of the most used English words in a variety of constructions.

Teacher training courses were held for three or four days at the beginning of the dry season, either in December or early January. All teachers attended—old teachers for upgrading and new teachers for initial learning. These were led by the supervisors and concentrated on teaching practice and procedures as well as improvement of personal reading and writing skills. Two one-day courses were held in March and June to give reports, share problems, review previous material, and discuss wider topics, e.g. original writing.

The SIL members at first worked in all parts of the programme, but gradually handed over the responsibility to the supervisors, both for class

management and for writing of materials, although they continued to see to the production and storage of the books.

The following are the titles used at each level of the programme and the approximate number sold.

## Table V—Reading Materials in Vagla

| | *Number Sold* | *Level of Instruction* |
|---|---|---|
| *Pedagogical materials* | | |
| Primers I and II | 1500 | I |
| *Transition into English* | | |
| Let's Speak English I, II, & III with accompanying tapes | 200 | III |
| Let's Read English I, II, & III | Loaned to students | IV |
| *Reading materials* | | |
| Let's Tell Stories I, II, & III (folk tales) | 1100 | II |
| Jungle book stories (3 titles) | 530 | II |
| Bird Book | 180 | II |
| Jungle Book stories (2 titles) | 560 | III |
| Proverbs & local interest books (3 titles) | 770 | III |
| Books including Vagla & English (materials (2 titles) | 225 | IV |
| Simple English books (2 titles) | 120 | IV |
| Other Vagla books (3 titles) | 485 | IV |
| Stories About Jesus (5 titles) | 1340 | II |
| Old Testament stories (4 titles) | 880 | III |
| Life of David | 80 | IV |
| Let's Sing Jesus Songs | 255 | |
| New Testament | 150 | |

*Newssheets.*

The first newssheets were typed and duplicated in 1975. They were produced every two to three months, but were not very popular until 1976 when a photo of Literacy Day was printed on the front page. Supervisors have been encouraged to produce these every month since the SIL team left.

*5. Results and problems*

Interest in learning to read was initially very low. There seemed to be two barriers to overcome before literacy was accepted. Schools were available in the area but children attending school learned to speak another language. School therefore was equated with the learning of a language that one did not already know. The objection to learning to read in Vagla was "We already know that language." The whole concept of learning to read and write was missing from their understanding of what school was for. Education was equated with speaking English. The other barrier was that they had a low opinion of themselves and their language, thinking of themselves as stupid. It is not surprising that a successful literacy programme has had far-reaching effects in the community, and has resulted in Vaglas becoming proud of their language because there are so many books printed in it.

## Table VI—Vagla Programme

| School Year(s) | Number of Classes | Number of Teachers | Number of Students | Number of Supervisors full time | part time |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1975-76 | 22 | 17 | 188 | 2 | |
| 1976-77 | 38 | 30 | 200 | 1 | 1 |
| 1977-78 | 41 | 36 | 250 | 1 | 1 |
| 1978-79 | 69 | 50 | 400 | 1 | 3 |

By 1979 397 first level certificates had been awarded
335 second level certificates had been awarded
118 third level certificates had been awarded
43 fourth level certificates had been awarded

However, the SIL worker estimated that a total of 450 Vaglas had learned to read.

All thirteen villages eventually had classes and most of these had several running simultaneously.

In addition to the above, two non-Vagla villages attempted to run classes, the first a Safalaba group who spoke fluent Vagla and the second a Waali group who had an enthusiastic Vagla teacher. Both attempts failed.

It is significant that the villages that were least inclined to take part in the programme were those villages situated in towns with good education facilities. The villages that did well were those that the SIL worker had most contact with, were located seven miles or so from a town, had only a primary school or no school and had enthusiastic teachers.

The most isolated usually started well with a fairly large number of students but often finished badly, possibly because there was not time for supervisors to be in constant contact to encourage them.

The thousands of books sold in the first four years of the programme were distributed through the teachers and supervisors. Teachers would take initial supplies back with them after the teacher's course at the beginning of each new session. As they needed more, they would obtain them either through the visiting supervisor or by sending a letter to the literacy office in Jentilpe, or by going themselves to collect them. All books were subsidised and approximately one third only of the cost was recovered through sales.

Although four years is not a very long period over which to estimate the general benefit enjoyed by the Vagla community because of the programme, the following can be cited. Three of the Vagla teachers trained in the programme were offered jobs in government schools and two successfully took these up. The transfer to English was certainly greatly appreciated by the Vaglas themselves and those who attained the level four certificate showed a much greater confidence in themselves and more interest in the outside world.

Certainly attitudes have changed dramatically. In 1975 the Vaglas would hardly buy a single book but in 1979 the literacy team could hardly keep up with the demand. The literacy classes have brought new self-confidence and a greater pride in their own language to the people. The Vaglas also now have greater involvement in the running of their community, and in 1979 had equal representation on the District Council Committee in Bole.

There have been signs that the community is behind the project apart from the involvement of the chiefs and elders. Some classes have hired themselves out for farm work until they have earned enough money to buy books for their class. At the teacher training sessions, relatives have provided accommodation and food for the trainees apart from the noon meal provided by the SIL team.

Supervisors now run courses in their own areas in order to relieve the problem of teachers having to sleep under a strange roof and the anxiety this causes.

Because of the increase in the number of students who attended the last Literacy Day, some villages hired lorries to transport them. On seeing that one chief had become literate, some of the other chiefs bought primers with the hope that they could learn.

One problem mentioned in this programme was that of testing students before they received their certificates. Before the major thrust began in 1976 the teachers were lax about making students come up to standard before passing them. They did not want to shame students so everyone passed, whether or not they could read or write. From 1976 the team enforced strict rules for testing. At first they handled this themselves until the standard was accepted. Miss Crouch suggests that this did much to improve the programme at this stage and made the students understand that they really had to learn to get a certificate. They also emphasised writing from this point, which proved helpful. Eventually they trained supervisors to do the testing but they never did this in their own villages.

Many of the problems facing other teams have also troubled this programme. These include teachers that wanted to be paid, delay in printing of much needed materials, lack of kerosene and supplies, and transport for the supervisors. Roads are bad and motorbikes and Mobylettes are in need of constant repair. Shortage of parts, batteries and gasoline have added to the frustrations and delays. Another pressing need was for adequate storage in metal containers to protect books in a country where cockroaches, mildew and vermin can destroy books with amazing speed. This programme has suffered too because it has been difficult to find committed supervisors.

# The Konkomba Programme

*1. Background of the language group.*

The traditional homeland area of the Konkomba is west of Tamale, toward the Togo border and northeast of Yendi. Most of the Konkombas do not now live in this home area, but they still relate back to it. There are considerable numbers scattered to the south and west, and some also to the north, in areas considered to belong primarily to other language groups. These farther-flung Konkombas may be 250 miles or more away from the homeland area. Total numbers in Ghana probably reach 300,000 with another 50,000 or more in Togo.

Most Konkombas are hard-working subsistence farmers, cultivating yams and guinea corn as well as millet and groundnuts; products differ according to the region. Nearly everyone also rears some livestock such as cows, sheep and guinea fowl. In general, neighbouring language groups consider the Konkombas to be inferior and they also have this image of themselves. They can however be aggressive both among themselves and with other people and have shown pride and initiative by forming youth associations.

The constant migration from their homeland area has taken place as they have repeatedly looked for better farming lands.

The Konkombas have chiefs and village elders, but no paramount chief; they acknowledge the suzerainty of the Dagomba paramount chief. The chieftaincy system is not strong and the chiefs are not always influential. It is the landowners who have the most influence in the group. Kinship ties are however strong and important and underlie the fabric of relationships to a large degree. The chiefs and elders do not provide strong leadership in the villages, innovation and decision making often being in the hands of spirited young people. This lack of strong leadership is in marked contrast to the other groups in this study.

There are some twenty schools in the Saboba (homeland) area, and a middle school in Saboba itself. Outside this area the schools are fewer. Habitually Konkombas choose to farm in more remote areas and many of the inaccessible bush villages do not have schools. The SIL worker estimates that the school attendance for primary age children is probably as low as 1%, with a high drop-out rate. In 1979 there were fewer than ten Konkombas in the top form of the middle school at Saboba. In the remoter villages there is a high level of monolingualism, a few speaking some Dagbani and virtually no English. In roadside villages there would generally be one or two literate persons, but none in the bush villages.

Motivation for literacy was very low at the beginning of the programme. This was due to the lack of strong leadership, the way the communities are scattered over a large area, and the lack of suitable people to serve as teachers. Whereas among other groups school leavers and 'drop-outs' were often used as teachers, among the Konkombas such persons were difficult to find, and they were embarrassed to offer their services because of their lack of skills. In the homeland area the programme was seen as a means of improving one's command of English, and this aroused some slight interest. Away from the homeland area interest has built up gradually, the programme being seen as a means of general self-improvement, something which would 'open their eyes' as they put it. There was also a little interest on the part of members of some churches who wanted to be able to read the Scriptures that had been translated.

*2. Overview of the programme.*

Miss M. Steele began work on the language in 1962 and some preliminary work was done on a trial primer in 1969–70. In 1976 Miss M. Langdon joined the team to specialise in literacy work and the primers were revised with a view to beginning a major literacy thrust, a thousand readers being the specified objective. This thrust was initially in the homeland area. Seventeen villages around Saboba were visited, the chiefs and elders canvassed, and each was requested to send two teachers for training, so that classes could begin in the villages. Posters were left in each village. Churches and mission groups were visited and also invited to send teachers for training. The Department for Social Welfare and Community Development and the Education Departments were informed, and were cooperative. A supervisor was employed and the first teacher training course was led by him in December 1976. The Department of Social Welfare and Community Development sent observers to the course and the Education Department allowed one of its schools to be used for

it. Enthusiasm was high but it was difficult to find trainee teachers from bush villages because of their low literacy rate.

A total of 17 participated but of these only 12 were able to start classes at the beginning of 1977. The classes started with large numbers, but enthusiasm waned quickly as the difficulty of learning became apparent and there were many drop-outs. The programme did pick up momentum, however, and by the end of the dry season in May there were nearly 300 students and 20 active teachers. The teachers who had not attended the teacher training course were given individual help to get started. The SIL workers and the supervisor invested considerable time in encouragement and informal supervision during this season. At the end 72 students passed their tests and received certificates at the first level. This was encouraging in view of the somewhat unpromising situation when the programme started.

Cooperation with local agencies was good. Two schools and four churches were made available for evening classes. The court house at Saboba was made available for a literacy office and for the Literacy Day celebration in June. Unlike the other programmes, some missions and churches preferred to run their own literacy classes but they sent their teachers to the SIL training course and used the pedagogical materials that were available from the Institute. These classes were not always successful as they did not have the supervisory help that the Institute programme provided.

The number of classes doubled during the second season, and doubled again during 1979 when considerable expansion into other geographical areas was possible. At the close of this season there were 90 classes with 900 students not including the independent church and mission classes. According to latest reports, numbers have more than doubled again during the 1980 season. There has been a greater interest in literacy outside the home area than in the more conservative area around Saboba. This is probably due to a greater willingness to change and accept new ideas on the part of the people in these outlying areas.

The widely scattered area of the Konkombas has influenced the way teachers have been trained. Short courses have been held in various areas rather than at one central location to avoid the need for travel. Ten courses were held in different villages throughout the region in 1978, and there were fourteen in 1979.

There has been only one full-time supervisor but by 1979 he was assisted by four part-time men who were responsible for different areas.

There have been three Literacy Day celebrations, with one additional event of some significance for the programme, namely the dedication of the Konkomba New Testament which stirred interest in reading among church groups.

The following materials have been used in the programme.

## Table VII—Reading Materials in Konkomba

| | Number published | Number sold |
|---|---|---|
| *Pedagogical materials* | | |
| Preprimer | 2000 | 500 |
| Primer 1 | 16500 | not available |
| Primer 2 | 4000 | 1400 |
| Alphabet Book | 2000 | 2000 |
| *Transition into English* | | |
| 5 books | 100 | 20 |
| 3 tapes | not available | not available |
| dictionary | not available | 50 |
| *Reading materials* | | |
| Folk tales 1–4 | 100 | sold out |
| Hospital book | 200 | 100 |
| Health book | 50 | 50 |
| Numbers book | 50 | 50 |
| Noah | 3000 | 2500 |
| Jonah | 2000 | 1500 |
| Ruth | 50 | 50 |
| Bible Society easy readers | not available | sold out |
| Matthew | 2000 | 2000 |
| New Testament | 2000 | Most of these have now been sold |
| Mark and Acts were duplicated | | The 500 copies of each were sold out |

## Table VIII—Konkomba Programme

| School Year | *Number of* I Classes | *Number of* Teachers | *Number of* Students | *Number of Supervisors* full time | part time | volunteers |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1977 | *20* | *20* | *285* | *1* | | |
| 1978 | *40* | *40* | *400* | *1* | *2* | |
| 1979 | *81* | *92* | *900* | *1* | *4* | |
| 1980 | *181* | *206* | *2050* | *1* | *2* | *10* |

*3. Results and Problems*

The present interest in literacy among the Konkomba people is surprisingly high in view of the little interest shown during the years of linguistic research and Scripture translation. Since 1977 when the literacy programme was launched there has been a steady increase in interest and in participation. Table VIII shows this.

The supervisors train their own teachers locally and the problem of long distances which have made supervision difficult has been taken care of by appointing volunteer supervisors in most areas. The overall planning of the campaign is in the hands of the Konkomba Literacy Committee and they advise and assist the SIL worker.

We do not have information concerning the different levels at which the classes have been taught, or concerning the numbers of students granted certificates at different levels. A small proportion had apparently gone on to levels two and three by 1979, and it is assumed that this proportion has increased as the programme has gathered momentum. It has been difficult to keep records because of the far-flung nature of the programme, and its decentralisation and extensive use of volunteer personnel.

# The Kasem Programme

*1. Background of the language group.*

The Kasem-speaking area straddles the very north of Ghana and the south of Upper Volta, with about half of the people in each country. This study is concerned only with the Ghana half of the area although the literacy materials are being used to some extent in Upper Volta also.

There are three major towns, Navrongo, Paga and Chiana (in order of size). Each of these towns and most of the many villages are accessible by road, although one important area of Paga is cut off at times of high rainfall because the road bridge has been broken for several years.

Farming is reasonably progressive, with cotton as an increasingly popular cash crop to supplement the common food crops of millet, groundnuts, rice, and guinea corn. Dry season gardens produce a very profitable crop of tomatoes that are sold to traders for consumption in the south of the country. Employment is available in government administration, teaching, building, trading and recently in a large irrigation project. The Kasena area (i.e. where Kasem is spoken) appears to be the most prosperous and progressive of those covered in this study.

The area is divided into three chieftainships, Navrongo, Paga, and Chiana and each of the present paramount chiefs is young, i.e. between twenty and thirty years of age, and forward looking. Under each is a well established system of local chiefs, headmen and elders.

The Kasena area is not the largest language group in the Upper Region by geographical area or population, but it is probably the most influential at present. Kasem is one of the official languages recognized by the government for development of educational materials up through all secondary school levels, and for communication of government information on censuses and elections. It has been used as a medium of instruction in the local schools for probably 15 years. Almost all the

school teachers are local Kasenas. There has been good schooling in the area for many years at primary and middle levels, and there is an excellent secondary school. Education is generally regarded with favor. About 75% of the villages have their own primary school and there are literates in most villages.

There was an immediate interest in the literacy programme, and nobody questioned its use of the vernacular. This undoubtedly was due to the official recognition of Kasem and its use in schools. Educated persons have considerable prestige in the area, and people generally value the increased opportunities for employment that education brings. This is in sharp contrast with other groups where schooling has been largely in English, and where this has been regarded as the proper medium for education, rather than the mother tongue. Kasenas were also interested in the literacy programme because of a desire to write letters, and because it offered an opportunity for them to improve their grasp of English.

*2. Overview of the programme.*

SIL assigned a team to the language in 1962. They studied the sound system and grammar and made several trial orthographies. In 1972 a second team, Mr. and Mrs. P. Hewer, took over the project. By 1975 experimental reading primers had been prepared and two trial classes were begun. These continued under the leadership of Kasenas, while Mr. and Mrs. Hewer were on home leave.

The objective of the programme was to teach a thousand Kasenas to read their language with the opportunity of transfer to English for those who wanted this. The strategy was to begin classes in the Paga area and then to spread to the Navrongo and Chiana areas. Work was to concentrate on adults, not children, although all material was to be compatible with school use. It was anticipated that school buildings might be used for classes. Books were available to continue reading skills but their use was not designed as part of the classes. The Kasena programme does not appear to have had such clearly distinguished levels of instruction as the other programmes.

A major thrust developed in 1976 when the Hewers returned from home leave, and it spread rapidly throughout the Paga area. Suitable teachers volunteered readily, even before training courses were offered. In 1979 classes were requested in a district of the Chiana area, but a major thrust was not made in either Navrongo or Chiana areas as literacy classes in English were available through the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development and the Hewers did not want to compete with these.

The programme has been developed in close cooperation with the head of the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development in the Chiana area, Mr. F. Aloa, who has assisted the programme in various ways including the training of teachers. He has jointly planned the Literacy Days and receives reports of the progress of the project.

The strategy in training teachers developed and altered as the programme proceeded. At first, volunteer teachers were called in for three days training in Paga, but trainees protested that three full days was too long to be away from their work. In this part of Ghana farming continues throughout the rainy and dry seasons so there was no time of the year when farm work was slack. It also proved to be expensive to feed trainees for three days. Courses were reduced first to two days and then to one, and finally it seemed best to train teachers in their own villages. This seems to be more culturally appropriate although a need remains for teachers to have the encouragement of meeting together occasionally to review their programmes, to discuss problems and to encourage one another.

As in other programmes, supervisors were paid and gradually took over the work of training the teachers and visiting the classes. In 1979 the number of supervisors had increased to one full time and two part time persons, supervising 50 classes and approximately 850 students.

Although the programme was intended for adults, the age range of those attending classes varied between 8 and 30 years old. The majority of students completing both primers were in their teens. Some villages which had no primary schools also had large classes of primary age children in addition to classes for the teens and twenties. Mrs. J. Hewer reports that the classes of younger children progressed very slowly, and by 1979 none had completed the second primer.

Materials available in the programme as of December 1978 are listed in Table IX on the following page.

There are no records of what was sold during the home leave of the Hewers after December 1978.

Primers 1 and 2 teach all letters and combination of letters and are quite comprehensive. Anyone reaching the end of the Primer 2 and passing the test on it can cope with most new material.

Distribution has primarily been through the literacy office in Paga though some materials have also been sold at local markets. The Hewers estimate that approximately half of the books are sold to persons who are not in the classes. Books have been sold at cost price and have not been subsidised, so that the programme will continue without outside funds once the SIL team has withdrawn. It is felt that the people in the Kasena area have enough money to buy what they really want.

## Table IX—Reading Materials in Kasem

| | Number published | Number sold |
|---|---|---|
| *Pedagogical materials* | | |
| Primer 1 | 2100 | 1100 |
| Primer 2 | 1000 | 230 |
| *Transition into English* | | |
| English for Kasena Readers | 500 | 200 |
| Teachers' Handbook | 50 | not available |
| *Reading materials* | | |
| Local Animals | 1000 | 300 |
| Folktales | 1000 | 200 |
| Childhood tales | 600 | 175 |
| A Children's Story | 350 | 50 |
| Growing Cotton | 350 | 50 |
| Moses I | 500 | 45 |
| Moses II | 500 | 320 |
| Moses III | 500 | 250 |
| Moses IV | 500 | 200 |
| Moses V | 500 | 150 |

Two events that have varied somewhat from the other programmes were the Literacy Displays held in 1977 and 1978. These were festive occasions to promote interest in literacy among the students and villagers. Local officials and chiefs were invited, and there were reading and writing competitions between the classes, and also a local-style drama depicting the problems of being unable to read. There was also drumming and dancing presented by various villages. These occasions attracted about 200 people and provided excellent entertainment besides promoting interest in the literacy classes.

A successful Literacy Day was also held in 1978 and certificates were presented to approximately 80 level one and 40 level two students. There were no celebration activities in 1979, when the Hewers were again on home leave.

*3. Results and problems.*

The Kasena program grew rapidly and almost spontaneously, and it has been particularly difficult to keep accurate records of class attendance. The following statistics are estimates provided by the SIL team.

## Table X—Kasena Programme

| School Year | Number of Classes | Number of Teachers | Number of Students | Number of Supervisors full time | part time |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1975 | 2 | | 30 | 1 | |
| 1976 | 30 | 63 | 450 | 1 | |
| 1977 | 40 | 20 | 570 | 1 | 1 |
| 1978 | 45 | 18 | 700 | 1 | 1 |
| 1979 | 50 | 12 | 850 | 1 | 2 |

The Kasena programme benefited from a positive attitude to vernacular literature and a high level of literate and semi-literate skills. The programme was therefore widely welcomed, and classes spread rapidly with only minimum training or organisation. The Hewers were unable, for personal reasons, to give much time to supervising activities, and although the Kasena supervisors showed excellent initiative, the programme had much less ongoing help and encouragement than those already described. Because of its wide general acceptance, less effort was spent in visiting the chiefs to foster their responsibility for the programme, and this has proved to be a weakness. Teachers felt no obligation to stay with their classes when there were other calls on their time, and a number of them moved out of the area to take employment opportunities. The general rate of progress in the classes is reported to be slower than expected, though apparently it is felt to be adequate by both teachers and students. Hard data on either classes or individual attainment is unfortunately lacking, and is another reflection of the organisational weakness which the programme has suffered to date. Although it is not possible to measure its success in specific terms, the programme does appear to be continuing at the present time.

A verbal report from Mr. G. Hunt, an SIL member who had recent contact with the programme, indicates that it has been very successful not only in teaching people to read and write in Kasem, but also in giving them a good standard of English. According to this report, two men who had completed the literacy instruction, including the bridge into English, decided to enroll in the first grade of the primary school. Their competence was such that they were immediately moved up to the fourth grade, for their ability to read English already exceeded the standard attained in the third grade. Mr. Hunt also reported that persons who had become teachers of literacy classes were in demand to become professional teachers in the schools.

In addition to the problems of supplies mentioned for other programmes, the Kasena programme has faced an unusual situation (for this

study) in the lack of a season of the year when students are free from agricultural work and can concentrate on literacy. There has also been a problem related to the orthography to be used in literacy materials, since some Kasena literature had already been produced in an orthography which did not correspond to certain linguistic features of the language. Attempts to gain agreement on an orthography easier for learners to use have not been successful, and the materials have therefore been produced in a compromise orthography which, although widely acceptable, is not officially approved.

# The Sisaala Programme

*1. Background of the language group.*

The Sisaala people are located in the Upper Region west of the Kasena area. The triangular shaped territory extends 70 miles in an east-west direction and 60 miles in a north-south direction. The population is about 80,000. They raise a cash crop of cotton, and in one area, a commercial crop of rice. In other respects crops and livestock are the same as the other groups in this study.

The Sisaalas have a paramount chief who is elected by the elders of the villages. There is however no permanent center where successive paramount chiefs are expected to reside. There is some dissension among the people and not all acknowledge the present paramount chief, but support rivals among other aspiring men. The group therefore lacks strong leadership at the present time.

There are fifteen primary schools and three middle schools in the area. Two of the latter are in Tumu, the chief town of the area. Only 3% of the people are estimated to be literate. School teachers are seldom Sisaala speakers so the use of the vernacular in the schools is low. Those who receive sufficient education usually migrate to the south for better paying jobs. This means that in many bush villages no one is literate, and few are fitted to serve as teachers for the programme. In a few cases educated Sisaalas have returned from the south and have been willing to serve as teachers.

One east-west road bisects the area. The government maintains a clinic in Tumu and in one other village, and the Catholics run a mobile clinic for child care. The Catholic church has twenty catechists among the villages; there is a Baptist church in the area; and recently another mission has begun work there. In general the Christian religion has made little impact on the community. Interest in the literacy programme has generally been

slight, such motivation as is present stemming chiefly from a desire to gain better command of English.

*2. Overview of the programme.*

The literacy classes were started on a trial basis in 1972 when two villages near Tumu asked for instruction. These people were motivated by a desire to read some portions of Scripture which had been translated. In subsequent years the Baptist church which had been active in these villages lost its impact and interest waned. As a few people in these villages began to read, people from other villages along the same road heard of the teaching and asked for a class. Because there were so few literate Sisaalas in the villages, the SIL team did the teaching themselves until there were fluent readers who could assume this responsibility.

Although literacy was begun on this somewhat informal basis, a better defined programme was subsequently planned as part of the E.Z.E. grant program, and was gradually implemented. A Sisaala was employed as supervisor, and various materials prepared for use in the programme. SIL workers Mr. and Mrs. J. Frempong have however, been absent from the area for long periods of time for various duties and the supervisor proved unable to handle the job successfully without their assistance. This has meant that the programme is a long way behind schedule.

The first supervisor was appointed in 1976, but the Frempongs went on home leave at this time and the programme halted almost completely. On their return in 1977 two part-time supervisors were appointed, one of these being a product of the earlier literacy classes. Classes were started up again, but the Frempongs were unable to give time to support the programme, being needed for SIL administrative responsibilities in Tamale, so progress was slight.

A good selection of Sisaala materials suitable for the programme was available, some of this having been produced at a course for school teachers which had been held in 1973 in the hope of introducing Sisaala materials into schools. An eight-day training course for volunteer teachers was offered in 1979, and attended by 35 prospective instructors for literacy classes and at this time enthusiasm for the programme increased. A recent report indicates that in 1980, 30 classes were being held in 22 villages, with a total of 350 students. There is no report of Literacy Days or other promotional activities.

Materials available in the programmes are listed in Table XI.

*3. Results and problems.*

Classes have been very spasmodic and records are not available, so it is difficult to get a real picture of the progression of this programme. With

the SIL team now resident in the area the programme is likely to gather momentum in the near future.

The main problems of the programme have been the absence of the SIL team on many occasions before the programme was well launched and the difficulty in finding a suitable and reliable supervisor to take responsibility for the programme. Added to these have been the usual lack of supplies and of storage facilities. There has also been the need of a literacy office in the Sisaala area.

## Table XI—Reading Materials in Sisaala

| | Number published | Number sold |
|---|---|---|
| *Pedagogical materials* | | |
| Alphabet Book | 1500 | 1100 |
| Preprimer | 500 | not available |
| Primer 1 | 2000 | 600 |
| Primer 2 | 1000 | not available |
| *Transition into English* | | |
| Let's Learn English Book 1 | 1100 | 60 |
| Let's Learn English Book 2 | 100 | 60 |
| Sisaala-English Handbook | 1300 | 400 |
| English-Sisaala Dictionary | 600 | 200 |
| *Reading Books* | | |
| Sisaala Stories I | 500 | 450 |
| Sisaala Stories II | 1100 | 100 |
| Health (water) | 300 | 200 |
| Health (food) | 300 | 200 |
| Animals of West Africa | 300 | 100 |
| How Cocoa Came to Ghana | 1300 | 300 |
| The Tortoise and Rabbit | 1000 | not available |
| Jungle Book 1 | 1000 | not available |
| Jungle Book 2 | 1000 | not available |
| Creation Story | 300 | 200 |
| Old Testament Stories | 1500 | 300 |
| New Testament Stories | 1500 | 300 |
| Prodigal Son | 300 | 300 |
| Genesis Abridgement | 1000 | 100 |
| Scripture booklets | 10000 | 500 |
| Mark | 800 | 280 |
| Acts | 500 | 25 |
| Colossians | 100 | 20 |
| James | 100 | 20 |

*Newssheets*

Only produced when stories were available. Editions of 300 copies.

# Part III
# Evaluation of the Project

Any evaluation of the SIL literacy project is handicapped at this stage by two factors. First, only three of the programmes have reached the end of their proposed six-year duration, and thus can be expected to have achieved their objectives. Second, the information available is scanty in some cases, and tends to depend on the opinions and recollections of those involved, rather than upon detailed records. Though well designed in many respects, the project suffers badly from a failure to establish firm baseline data and to provide for regular reports and records.

Despite this regrettable lack, and the fact that the project is still in progress in a number of languages, it is our opinion that a valid, though rather general, evaluation can still be made at this time, and that significant conclusions can already be drawn from the information available. The assessment which is offered is based primarily on data from the Bimoba, the Tampulma and the Vagla programmes which have reached the six-year point. Data from the other programmes have also been taken into account, but are regarded as basically supplementary to the picture emerging from the first three. It is encouraging that the picture is generally consistent between the programmes, and that there is a clear indication of the project's general impact and its areas of strength. Some weak points are also apparent, the identification of which at this stage in the project should be beneficial to the rest of its operation.

The project will be reviewed first in relation to specific values and attainments which relate to its immediate impact. Following this an attempt will be made to identify some of its special strengths and weaknesses. Finally some recommendations will be made, both for the final stages of the current project and for other projects which might be planned for similar situations.

*Attainment of Specified Objectives*

The following statement of the project's general purpose is taken from the formal proposal made to the E.Z.E. organization as a basis for the granting of funds. It is repeated here to indicate the goal toward which the programmes are stated to have been aimed. The major part of the statement is as follows:

> 1. To promote literacy and the use of literature in such a way as to bring about a comprehensive improvement in the welfare of the local population:
>
> Physical—through an increased knowledge of good health etc.
> Social—through an improved mode of life and work
> Intellectual—through an introduction to education in the local language and in English, the national language
> Spiritual—through an introduction to books of high moral value, including the translation of the New Testament.
>
> 2. To promote an ongoing programme of literacy which will become progressively independent of the Institute of Linguistics."

In addition to this general and rather intangible statement of purpose, a more specific objective was set for each language programme, namely "to teach (a stated number of) people to read and write their own language." This number was set at 1,000 for the Bimoba, Kasem and Konkomba, 700 to 1,000 for the Tampulma, 500 for the Vagla and 2,000 for the Sisaala, though in the latter case two dialect areas were evidently in mind. The time frame in each case was a six-year one, so presumably these numbers were to be achieved by the end of the sixth year. Although the dates are not precisely defined, it appears that the six years would be complete by 1978 for the Bimoba, by 1979 for the Tampulma and Vagla, and by 1981 for the Konkomba, Kasem and Sisaala.

The degree to which these objectives have been reached cannot be stated with precison however because the objectives were insufficiently defined, and because proceedures for testing and record keeping were inadequate, or at least the records are not available. The degree of attainment envisaged by the stated objective "to teach 1,000 people to read and write..." is nowhere defined. The nature of the programmes, with an inevitable slow startup in most cases, seems to indicate that successful completion of the first level of instruction is regarded as fulfilling this objective. It is only in the third year of the programme that the first-level classes progressed beyond the trial stage so it is clearly unrealistic to expect 1,000 successful graduates of later levels of instruc-

tion within a six-year time frame. On the other hand level 1 skills seem inadequate as a basis for an ongoing habit of reading and writing since this only reflects mastery of a full range of syllables in limited dictation and the decoding of specific material. The very provision of the 2nd and 3rd levels of instruction seems to indicate that greater fluency was recognised as desirable.

This interpretation of the project's objectives is confirmed in a personal communication from Mr. E. R. Rowland, director of SIL in Ghana at the time the project was developed. He admits that the definition of 'an ongoing literacy programme' was imprecise at that time, and says that the numbers set for the different languages should be understood as follows. "1,000 people involved in a literacy programme, all of whom have attained level 1, some of whom have attained levels 2 and 3, some of whom have been selected and trained as instructors, and a few of whom have been selected and are in training as supervisors." This definition, though still imprecise, is helpful, and will be accepted for the present study.

Assuming, then, a composite objective of the specified number of certificates awarded at level 1, plus some significant attainment at subsequent levels and some persons trained (as stated above), then this seems to have been substantially attained or surpassed within the time projected for the Bimoba, Tampulma and Vagla. The Konkomba should certainly obtain its objective also, if the percentage of successful students is anything like that of the other programmes. For the Kasena the prospect of success seems reasonable if the time frame is adjusted to take account of the absence of SIL personnel at crucial stages in the programme. It seems less likely that the Sisaala will attain its objectives without an extension of time. In these last two cases, it is arguable that the standard 6-year time frame should be adjusted to take account of the absence of the SIL teams before the programme was in the hands of trained local people. Another way of looking at this however would be to recognise that the objectives may not be met in these cases, and to identify such absence as a sufficient reason.

The lack of any definition of the degree of attainment presents another problem, since there is no evidence that certificates that were awarded for successful completion of level 1 represented an identical standard from one program to another.

At a more general level however, there is much to indicate that the programs have been, and continue to be, very successful in both teaching the skills of literacy and promoting the habit of reading and writing. The local production of vernacular newssheets, and the ready sale for these and for other vernacular literature shows this. Another evidence is the steady growth in the number of people attending classes, and along with

this the growth in the number of volunteer teachers in most of the programmes. This is the more remarkable since in many cases motivation for any form of education was initially very low, and the vernacular was not in use in a written form. Such sustained growth and increasing interest is hardly conceivable if the programmes have not in fact been bringing a high proportion of their participants to a level satisfactory in their own eyes. Although documentary proof of this is lacking, we may assume that this level was an ability to read and write in their own language at least to the extent that the participants felt desirable and necessary for their own purposes. These programmes have depended so largely on the unpaid participation of local persons that their continuance and growth is in itself a significant indicator of their success.

The question will be posed later whether the programmes have raised the habit of literacy to a selfsustaining point in these communities. For the present it is sufficient to note that quantified and dated objectives were inadequately defined, but that progress towards what these are assumed to have been seems to have been adequate.

*Promotion of Socio-economic Development*

The statement of the project's general purpose includes bringing about "a comprehensive improvement in the welfare of the local population," which is further stated to include both physical and social aspects. It is of interest to note that within the area which may generally be designated "socio-economic development," this project has emphasized the social rather than the economic. Furthermore, such development seems to be viewed as an important by product of the project rather than as its primary focus.

As has been acknowledged earlier, it is widely accepted today that literacy is not an end in itself but is a means to the wider good of the society that adopts it. The project being studied is of particular interest for the 1980s in that it does not follow either the "functional" or the "psycho-social" literacy models which have been developed in recent years in order to maximise the impact of literacy upon society. The psycho-social approach associated with Mr. P. Freire and his followers emphasises the student's need to understand himself and his environment, and then to act together with his fellows to bring about changes that will improve their lives. It avoids a predetermined curriculum and a formal teacher-pupil relationship. The functional literacy approach retains classes and prepared materials, but seeks to relate such materials very closely to the practical skills which are considered to be of functional usefulness to the student. If the practical skill were farming, for example, the pedagogical materials might make use of farming vocabulary and quickly move

to the point where they were offering instruction, overt or covert, on improving farming methodology.

In contrast to either of these models, the programmes have retained a methodology associated with a traditional approach to literacy which in recent years has been widely regarded as inferior. Students have been taught in classes by instructors who have the status and prestige of teachers, with tests and certificates to mark progress. The primers and the classroom techniques have been designed to emphasise the skills of reading rather than to have a functional application to problems of daily life, or to promote reflection and action on social or political issues.

It may be surprising, therefore, to observe the very significant degree of socio-economic development which seems to have accompanied the three programmes which have completed their full six-year course. The reports in Part II mention improved health awareness, increased school attendance, more openness to better technology in agriculture, group action to improve communications and economic opportunity, increased confidence in dealing with outside authorities etc. Perhaps of even great significance is the marked gain in self-esteem and group pride noted for the Vagla and the Tampulma, which contrasts strongly with the situation described as present before the programmes took place. It is perhaps unfortunate that the evidence for such change comes frequently in the form of opinions from those who have been involved in the programmes, but this is consistently confirmed by such evidence as is available from other sources, so we see no reason to question the admissibility of these opinions.

There is of course no means of demonstrating that these changes took place as a direct result of the literacy project, rather than as a result of some other influence which was being brought to bear on the communities at the same time as the programmes took place. On the other hand, we know of no other projects likely to have had such effects, and a similar pattern of response is clear in all three of the completed programmes. None of the language groups appear to have demonstrated any tendency toward this kind of development before the literacy programmes were begun. It therefore seems reasonable to regard such development as one of the effects of the literacy programmes, and therefore to evaluate the programmes as having satisfactory results from the socio-economic point of view.

Reflecting further on the means by which these changes came about, we may note that although there was no "functional" emphasis within the primers, much of the supplementary reading material which was produced for the project (in many cases by the supervisors) was clearly functional in content and emphasis. Most of the programmes produced literature on health topics or with some practical slant. The primers, in contrast,

majored on stories that were humorous or of cultural interest, rather than of a directly functional nature. The only element of the primers which was directly functional was the inclusion of instruction on writing letters to relatives or for other practical purposes which came at the end of many of the primer series.

The influence of the programmes on development was therefore indirect rather than direct. The high degree of participation of local communities in the programmes, both in decision making and in implementation, was probably of greater importance than the instructional aspects of the materials used. As has been noted in Part II, great care was exercised that the programmes should conform to cultural norms and expectations, and should be implemented through existing authority structures. This permitted the participatory nature of the programmes to develop, which in turn promoted the development of self-confidence which was necessary for openness to, and acceptance of, new ideas. The programmes seem to have achieved a significant degree of psycho-social impact, but without any direct effort towards this.

*Improved Control of English*

Another aspect of comprehensive improvement in the local population's welfare was stated as "an introduction to education in the local language and in English, the national language." Improved control of English may be demonstrated either by evidence of individuals entering the (English using) government school system, who would otherwise not have done so, or by evidence of persons who have learned, or improved their fluency in, English through the instruction offered within the project itself. These two achievements are not of course mutually exclusive.

There is encouraging evidence that the literacy programmes have been successful in developing a more favorable attitude towards the government school system and thus promoting an eventual improvement in the local control of English. The Bimoba report mentions 90 persons going on to school after completing the literacy classes, and making better than average progress there. It is not known how many of these could have been expected to attend school if they had not first attended the literacy classes, but it seems that few, if any, would have done so. The Tampulma report of a reversal in attitudes towards school and of the local initiative to build a school and request a teacher is striking evidence in a similar direction.

Concerning the transfer of newly found literacy skills to English within the project, four of the programmes report significant activity, three using books and cassette tapes (Tampulma, Vagla and Konkomba) and one using a text book only (Kasem). The latter programme, it should be

noted, enjoys a much higher initial degree of schooling and control of English than do the other language groups, making the support of taped materials less essential. Few people spoke English well enough to teach without cassette support in the other areas. The number of certificates awarded at level four in the Tampulma and Vagla programmes indicates that some significant success has been achieved in this aspect of the project.

The degree of success among the Tampulma is remarkable in view of the difficulties inherent in teaching English in these rural situations. Very few persons speak any English in areas away from major roads, and opportunity to use it meaningfully is rare. To master oral English primarily through cassette tapes is a formidable task in favorable conditions, let alone unfavorable ones. And there were additional acute problems of a practical nature, such as batteries selling at an excessive price if they were obtainable at all. The SIL workers make positive comment nevertheless on the enthusiasm they observed for learning English.

No specific objectives were set either for the number of persons who were to gain certificates at level four, or for the standard of mastery which should be attained. In general the level aimed at seems to have been to meet the most basic needs of rural people, that is, mastery of greetings and simple conversations appropriate to typical contacts with townspeople and officials. Students were also prepared to enter the government programme "Let's Read English." It is probably unrealistic to expect the majority of the members of rural communities to gain a greater command of English than this as long as their living and working situation does not bring them into spoken contact with it more frequently. This problem is not so acute in areas like that of the Bimoba and the Kasem, where contact with English speakers is more frequent and a greater degree of bilingualism exists. In more isolated areas the primary vehicle for greater mastery of English probably remains the school system. A key indicator of success, from the point of view of increased fluency in English, is therefore the attitude which the project has fostered towards the school, rather than the specific level of skills gained in the four levels of class instruction. Taking the two aspects together, it is our assessment that the data, though limited, show a significant degree of success in increasing control of English.

*Permanence of Results*

The second section of the project's statement of purpose reads "To promote an ongoing program of literacy which will become progressively independent of the Institute of Linguistics." This statement seems to

focus primarily on what may be called the institutionalisation of the project, that is, the development of an organization or institution which is fully in the hands of local people, and is capable of maintaining the operation of the programme as long as this is needed. The permanence of the project's results should be looked at, not only from this institutional point of view, but also to determine whether those who have been taught in it have acquired an enduring benefit. Has the skill of reading and writing been a permanent acquisition, or do such skills quickly disappear, leaving the students for all practical purposes functionally illiterate?

It is of course too early for there to be any satisfactory demonstration of the project's success in any of these respects. We may however note some encouraging indications of initial success so far as local institutionalisation is concerned. The Bimoba, for instance, operated successfully with minimal assistance or supervision from SIL staff from 1976 onwards (the last three of its six years) and the classes and literature production have continued into a seventh, eighth, and ninth year. The Tampulma supervisor and committee are evidently continuing to function two years after the withdrawal of the SIL team at the end of the six years of that programme. After the sixth year of the Vagla programme, and the withdrawal of the SIL workers, there was a violent local political upheaval which prevented the programme's continuation. Latest reports indicated however that certain aspects of the programme, at least, have been spontaneously resumed.

This encouraging picture is somewhat modified by the experience among the Sisaala, where the repeated absence of the SIL workers has meant the failure of the program to gather momentum and fulfill its design. In this case however the program seems never to have become properly established. The assistance and encouragement of an SIL team is an important element of the project's design, especially in the earliest years. It seems therefore that this instance of partial failure should not forbid a positive evaluation of the design itself, in the light of the evidence of the three completed programmes that local people have continued to operate for the initial years after the six-year period. The degree to which local persons have been involved in decision making from the start, and have increasingly had responsibility for operations as programmes develop, seems to be a key feature making for successful institutionalisation.

We must also note, however, that there has not yet been sufficient time to demonstrate the permanence of these new institutions. It is one thing for a programme like the Bimoba to be maintained without SIL encouragement and supervision while the funds for supervisor's salaries are still being supplied through SIL; it is another for the local community to develop an alternate source of funds, or some way of operating the programme which does not depend on such funds. It appears to be an

assumption of the project's designers that the successful operation of the project over a six-year period will awaken sufficient interest on the part of the community that it will assume financial responsibility for its continuation. We await with interest the events of the next few years which alone can demonstrate if this will take place.

The financial cost of these programs has been kept to a minimum, as noted below. This should be significant as the time comes for the local institutions to assume such responsibility. This seems to be one of the strong features of the project's design. Almost all the instruction has been done on a voluntary basis, the only salaries being those of the full time supervisors. Operational costs have been supervisory travel (most of this by bicycle or light motorcycle) and classroom materials, a very small sum. The publication of pedagogical and supplementary reading material has been a larger expense, but local production of mimeographed materials has been employed for newssheets and some reading books, and relatively inexpensive standards have been accepted for printed books. It was intended that all reading materials should be sold to the users initially at a subsidised price, but rising quickly to cover full production costs. The funds from these sales have been kept in reserve, designated as a revolving fund for each programme, available to cover the cost of publishing further books for sale when financial support from outside the programme is no longer available. This plan has been frustrated to a large degree by the rapid inflation and increasing cost of printing during this period, so that the funds accumulated from sales are quite inadequate to cover the cost of further publications.

For a local institution to carry on a programme of literacy independent of SIL, it will have to assume financial responsibility for supervisors' salaries and travel, and for classroom expenses. Perhaps ways can be found of making the communities which benefit from the classes the source of such funds, or of reciprocation of a different kind. There will also be the problem of capital funds to cover the publication of further reading materials, and the development of a willingness to pay sufficient amounts for such materials to cover at least the cost of printing further materials in an inflationary situation. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the Bimoba supervisor is reported to have been looking during 1980 for an outside financial sponsor to support that programme in the place of the SIL.

It may be argued that there is no need for the development of local institutions which will carry on indefinitely literacy programmes similar to the SIL-sponsored ones. If attitudes to the formal school system can be changed so that a larger proportion of children become literate through this government supported institution, the time will soon come when literacy programmes for adults and out of school youth will be unnecessary. This could in fact occur if the literacy programme should bring

about such a wide change of attitude that many more children attend school at least through the primary grades. Such a result appears also to depend in large measure on the character of the school curriculum and the degree to which this is relevant to the needs of rural families, and on similar factors which are beyond the scope of this report, and which can probably be influenced only little by programmes such as those under study. For our present purpose the question is whether it is necessary for the long term impact of these programmes that they continue in a substantially similar form after the six-year period in which SIL is sponsoring them. The statement of purpose appeared to assume that this is one of the goals of the project, but again there is no definition of the desired result against which progress can be evaluated.

Turning from the programmes' adequacy to meet the need for continuing literacy instruction in these communities, we must now consider whether it is producing permanent literates or only temporary ones. A neo-literate may relapse into a state of functional illiteracy if his reading and writing skills are not adequately developed and consolidated during the instruction programme which he undergoes. This has been recognised and provided for in the present programmes with the establishment of three or four levels of instruction. While in level one the student attains mastery of all the syllables in all probable combinations and thus gains the ability to decode or build any word or utterance, fluency in the habit of reading and writing is the object of the second level, and the ability to compose original material is developed in the third. (Transfer to English is the major focus of the fourth.)

There seems to be no objective evidence available in the form of tests or records which prove that the degree of mastery obtained in levels two and three is a sufficient basis for the permanent retention of the literacy skills acquired. It is to be hoped that some attempt will be made to gain definite information in this area during the remaining years of the project. In the absence of such evidence we can only offer the opinion that students who complete level two successfully may well remain functionally literate given regular opportunity to practice their skills in daily life and that those completing levels three and four would seem very likely to do so. Those going no further than level one would appear to be in grave danger of relapsing into functional illiteracy in the absence of very strong encouragement from outside the literacy programme to continually use their skills by actually reading and writing. From this point of view then, the success of the programmes must be judged by the number of students gaining certificates at the second and subsequent levels rather then the first.

From another point of view however, no programme of literacy instruction can on its own produce a literate society in the sense of a

society that habitually reads and writes. It can only produce persons who, at the end of their instruction, have mastered the technical skills of literacy, and absorbed positive attitudes to literature and its use. Whether or not those skills are used depends upon many things including the availability and affordability of literature which people want to read, and, for a society that previously has not included reading and writing as a normal part of everyday life, the emergence of a relevance for the written word and some repeated stimulus for its use. The literacy programmes being studied are noteworthy for the degree to which they have tried to stimulate both the practice of reading and the production of literature.

The reading of connected texts for meaning as opposed to the decoding of individual words is an integral feature of the reading primers used at the first level, and is the major emphasis of the second. Stimulation of creative writing, including stories for other students to read, is a feature of the third level. It was recognized as one of the responsibilities of the full time supervisors to author or translate supplementary reading material for use in the advanced levels, and to produce the newssheets, using material contributed by students whenever possible. They were also generally responsible for both the physical production (publication) of the newssheets by using a mimeograph in the village, and for the distribution of reading material of all kinds through the classes or in other ways. In addition to this a major contribution of the SIL teams was in the area of the production of reading matter in the vernacular, including Scripture portions, working jointly with local people as co-authors or co-translators. They also greatly facilitated the distribution of literature once this was published.

What assessment can be made of the degree to which all this has resulted in ongoing habits of reading and writing? Here as elsewhere hard data are lacking and must be obtained before any confident assertions can be made. But the general picture seems somewhat encouraging. Examples include the constant supply of stories offered for inclusion in the Bimoba newssheet, the strong demand for this sheet whenever it is published, the good level of demand for books published in the other programmes (many regular publications have gone into a second printing), and the eagerness for more titles to be published. Many programmes also report that letters to distant relatives are more common as a result of the classes. A preliminary evaluation therefore seems to be that the project is producing at least a certain number of readers who can be expected not to relapse into functional illiteracy if a flow of available literature can be maintained. The project is also facilitating the transfer of reading skills to the English language in which much literature is already available.

*The Cost of the Project*

Calculation of the true cost of the project is complicated by the serious fall in the value of the Ghanaian cedi in relation to other world currencies during the time of the programs operation. In July 1976 ¢ 1.00 was worth approximately 87 U.S. cents (or 2.20 Deutch:marks), but was worth considerably less than half this amount three years later. The average value of the Cedi over this three-year period was approximately $0.55 U.S. (or 1.40 Deutchmarks).

Records show the following expenses for the three years July 1976 to June 1979, for the Bimoba, Tampulma, and Vagla programmes:

| | |
|---|---|
| Supervisors salaries | ¢ 19,598 |
| Supervisory travel | ¢ 4,196 |
| Classroom materials | ¢ 1,347 |
| Literature (primers and readers) | ¢ 9,708 |
| Total | ¢ 34,849. |

The amount listed for literature represents the cost of printing, not taking into account amounts recouped by sales. The literature figure does not include the cost of Scripture, Bible stories or any materials of a religious character, although these were in some cases utilized as supplementary materials.

If this total expense is divided by the number of certificates that have been awarded in these programmes (estimated to be ¢ 4,381 during this period), we obtain a per capita cost of ¢ 7.95 for the successful completion of a level of instruction. If the total number of students enrolled in the courses is used (estimated to be ¢ 6,171), the amount shrinks to ¢ 5.65 per season of instruction for each student. The dollar cost reckoning on the average value of the cedi is $4.37 and $3.10 respectively.

The meaningfulness of any such calculation is rather low for a project of this kind however. No allowance is made in these figures for the value of the time spent by SIL members in promoting and assisting the programs. For the purpose of indicating a matching contribution by SIL to funds provided by the E.Z.E., an SIL member's time was valued at $1,000 per year. Such a value seems far less than realistic however, and also it does not take into account in any way the value of the years of linguistic and cultural research which provided the essential basis for the project.

For the government of Ghana and for the people of villages affected, the cost-to-benefit ratio of the project is presumably satisfactory, since they incurred virtually no expense in the project, but rather received a significant inflow of hard currency and employment opportunity through it. From the point of view of the major funding agency, the E.Z.E., the

cost-to-benefit ratio also appears to be highly satisfactory, especially when compared with that reported for many other rural literacy projects. The degree of success achieved has been high, while costs have been minimal because the project was designed to utilize volunteers in all roles but that of supervisor.

But the true cost of a project of this nature is obscured by the gratuitous services of the organisation chiefly responsible (i.e., SIL). Would the cost-to-benefit ratio be equally acceptable to a government that wished to implement such a project at its own expense rather than that of a philanthropic organisation? Information available does not provide an answer to such a question.

# Overall Evaluation and Recommendations

In general a favourable initial assessment of this project seems to be justified, but action to strengthen it clearly seems to be needed in several areas. The most obvious of these is the need for more adequate records to be kept and better data provided for future evaluatory studies, both formative and summative. Objectives, both short and long term, need to be specified precisely, and instruments to measure progress towards these need to be designed and used. Evaluatory activities should be planned as an integral part of the remainder of the project and local people trained to conduct them and reflect upon their implications. Failure to provide for this seems to be a serious flaw in the design of the project. This is understandable in the light of the strong preoccupation of the SIL organisation with practical field work, and its reliance on dedicated and competent staff who are accustomed to working toward broad and rather general goals and to making ad hoc adjustments to their programmes as these develop. But a project of this kind is both large enough and potentially significant enough to others involved in literacy and development that its results should be reported and evaluated fully. In addition the project itself should gain significantly from formative evaluation as it is implemented, particularly if local people participate fully in the process.

A second area in which the design of the project leaves room for serious concern is in what will happen when SIL sponsorship is withdrawn at the end of sixth year. As has been pointed out above, it seems likely that many students will still need to pass through the second and subsequent levels of instruction if their skills are to be consolidated and reading fluency attained. The maintenance of a flow of new reading matter readily available to the new readers is perhaps more important if relaspe into functional illiteracy is to be avoided. Within the project as now designed, the only provision towards this need appears to be the creation of literature revolving funds through the sale of books printed under the

E.Z.E. grant. But inflation has rendered this provision almost worthless. Some alternate means of securing ongoing funds for publications in an inflationary situation needs to be sought, and probably also some way of encouraging local authors and distributors, and facilitating both the repair of equipment and the availability of basic supplies for "village press" type operations.

A third area of concern relates more to problems of implementation than to original design. Not all of the six programmes studied have achieved an equal degree of success. Although this is to be expected and might be accounted for by factors inherent in particular situations which are not easily remedied by administrative action, in this case a pattern does appear to emerge. Project design calls for an SIL team to give major amounts of time and effort over the whole of the six-year time frame, but particularly in the earlier stages. The Bimoba, Tampulma, Vagla and Konkomba programmes show major progress coinciding with the presence and extended activity of the SIL teams, which at times amounted to the major part of their time. The Bimoba, Kasem and Sisaala programmes also show evidence of loss of momentum when such help was not available. For example the extended absence of the Bimoba worker coincided with very little production of literature and a failure to produce materials to transfer to English. The Kasena situation appears to be a very promising one with exceptional interest in vernacular literacy and unusual early response to the possibility of classes. But there is no evidence that this promise has matured into a solid programme with many certificates awarded. The SIL team was twice absent for home leave and was unable to give much time to the programme when present in the Kasena area. The Sisaala programme has made the least progress of all; here also the SIL team has been repeatedly absent from the area.

With a volunteer organisation of the character of SIL, some unevenness in the contribution that individuals are able to make is to be expected. This should be recognized by the SIL administration however, and when a commitment is made to a major grant-funded project such as the present one, arrangements need to be made to cover for occasions when individual members are for any reason unable to achieve what the project calls for. In this case, however, the central administrative staff for the project was absolutely minimal and there was no provision of experienced supervisory or consultant staff who could assist any of the programmes that needed help or arrange for this supervision and encouragement of local supervisors while the primary SIL workers were absent. It seems highly desireable that central supervisory staff of this kind be available to assist during the remaining years of the project and that the prolonged or repeated absences of the workers primarily responsible for the programmes be covered by the short or long term assignment of other

persons to assume their responsibilities. The excellent success of the three completed programmes is no guarantee of similar success in the remaining ones if the quality of implementation is allowed to fall away. The best-designed programmes are no stronger than their staff and none can be expected to succeed without the expenditure of time and effort as well as money.

The recognition of these shortcomings and dangers must not be allowed to obscure the large degree of success which the project appears to have enjoyed during its first three years of operation. Our overall evaluation at this initial stage cannot be less than "good to excellent." Very encouraging short-term results seem to be the norm and these have been achieved at remarkably low direct financial cost. These results are particularly impressive when compared with the lack of interest in literacy and education reported by the SIL workers for several of the language groups in the years before the programmes were begun. They have been achieved without apparent damage to the existing fabric of society and are accompanied by significant socio-economic development and by increased facility in English plus improved attitudes to education. In addition the prospect for long term conservation of the results seems good if some means can be found to foster the continuing production and distribution of suitable literature.

In closing we will identify several aspects of the programmes which seem to us to have been crucial to their success, or otherwise to be of special interest, and therefore significant for persons involved in literacy work in other areas.

The overall design of the programmes seems excellent. Strong points include the following: the curriculum is very broad, providing for the development of reading fluency and of creative writing as well as for mastery of reading skills, and for transfer to English as well as learning in the mother tongue. The use of the vernacular has undoubtedly proved productive both in relieving initial apprehension about the likely effect of the programmes and in making a successful learning experience possible for persons who had little or no control of a language of wider communication. Ultimate meeting of felt needs for better English was also an important factor in some areas.

Pedagogical materials were carefully designed, and somewhat eclectic in approach in most cases. The care exercised to make them culturally relevant and interesting was probably as important as their structural design. Still more important however was the attention to training the volunteer teachers, and to providing them with regular supervision and encouragement. The availability of supplementary reading material has also been an important factor. In this connection, it should be mentioned

that the E.Z.E. grant funds provided, among other things, help in establishing a small SIL press which produced many of the pedagogical and supplementary materials used in the programmes. In the difficult economic circumstances which developed, the cost and physical difficulty of producing such specialised materials as were required could well have crippled the whole project if this facility had not been available locally (at Tamale) and committed to meeting the project's needs as these arose.

A feature that we believe to be of outstanding importance was the attention paid to securing full participation of the community in all aspects of each programme. The authority structure was recognised and honoured both formally and by being expected to take a major responsibility in decision making and in implementation. More general "public relations activities" were also important, especially the Literacy Day celebrations which fit in so well with existing patterns for such occasions.

The meticulous planning of the programmes, with the recognition of many distinct phases each with appropriate activities and of a gradual build-up from a small beginning also appears to be a major strength. The later programmes have clearly benefited by the development, from the earliest ones, of a "master" model which could be used as a planning framework. It is particularly good to note that this model specifically allowed for substantial differences of local implementation to take account of cultural and other differences from language group to language group.

The use of volunteer rather than paid teachers is another key feature of these programmes. Insistence upon this meant significant delay in getting the programme going in some cases and has been a source of some problems in other cases, especially where it has not been possible to provide some other form of reward to teachers such as high status through public recognition of their work. But the policy has greatly reduced the need for outside funding and underlined the importance of working through the existing authority structure according to cultural values. It has meant that no programme could be run without substantial support from the community. In our opinion this feature of program design will have its most important effects in years to come when SIL sponsorship is no longer available. The likelihood of literacy instruction continuing at such a time seems to be much greater because a pattern of volunteer teaching has been established. This practice also maximises the effective involvement of the communities served, and of their leaders, in a helpful way.

Reference has already been made to the fact that this project follows more closely than might be expected a "traditional" approach to literacy rather than a functional or psycho-social one. Its success therefore seems significant for an assessment of the importance of these newer approaches. Undoubtedly each literacy programme must be tailor-made

for the sociological situation in which it is to be used. We should be slow to accord any new insight anything approaching universal validity. The present study demonstrates that in some circumstances at least, a more traditional approach can be very successful.

Finally, some reference must be made to the special contribution made to these programmes by the nature of the SIL organisation and the character of its workers. The years of linguistic and cultural study in which each team had already been engaged, and the excellent personal relationships they had established were indispensible elements in the programmes. Their personal commitment to the programs and unstinting support of the supervisors and teachers involved in them was another essential element. In many cases their association with the Christian religion, their rapport with local pastors and churches and their translation of Bible stories plus some or all of the New Testament into the local language has made a significant contribution to the literacy project. It is hard to see how these programmes could have been successful without committed personnel of this kind. We offer our warm congratulations to them for the degree of success their programmes are enjoying.

# APPENDIX A

Below is an extract from a letter dated 14th January, 1976, to Dr. Reinhold Meyer of E.Z.E. from Mr. E. R. Rowland, then director of SIL in Ghana. It provides additional insight into the character of the project and its philosophical background.

*Training of Instructors and Supervisors.*

i. Initial training courses for instructors.
Generally the content is as follows:

   a. Fluency in reading local language. There are sometimes those who have some knowledge of reading in English, and need help to transfer reading skills to their own language. Others have only learned to read the local language at literacy classes, and need increased fluency before teaching.

   b. Spelling. Consistency of spelling is emphasised, with spelling emphasis on sounds not found in English. These are discussed and practiced in dictation exercises.

   c. Demonstration and practice teaching. The method of teaching the primer and other materials is explained and demonstrated.

   d. Introduction to the making and use of teaching aids, e.g. flash cards.

   e. Creative writing is introduced at this stage.

   f. Class motivation. Discussion on helping slower pupils, class participation, methods to encourage regular attendance, creation of class loyalty and enthusiasm, relationship to community, and so on.

ii. Placement with experienced teachers.
Wherever possible the trainee teacher is placed into a teacher team

with an experienced person. Sometimes, when no experienced teacher is available in one village, a teacher will be asked to attend from a nearby village, or a supervisor will work with the trainee on teaching the class in the early stages.

iii. Supervisory visits.
Regular visits are made to the classes by the supervisors, and these are used to improve and correct any teaching deficiencies observed by the supervisors during the progress of the class.

iv. Selection of instructors.
This is normally carried out by the supervisors in consultation with the village chief and elders, and with other opinion leaders in the village. Suitable persons are then informally encouraged to volunteer their service. Where possible, suitable teachers or middle-school leavers are recruited, but the major factors are acceptance by the community, and aptitude to do the work. Some of our best teachers were illiterate before being taught in the present programme.

v. Selection of supervisors.
The supervisor is the key man in the literacy programme, and is chosen on the basis of three major factors:

a. Acceptance by the community, including the leadership.

b. High motivation for literacy work.

c. Aptitude and openness to training.

The residence of the Institute of Linguistics team in the area is an important factor in selection of supervisors. Persons who appear to be suitable can be tested out as teachers during one phase before selection and training in the next phase. Training of supervisors is, of necessity, usually in the form of personal instruction and on-the-job training by the Institute of Linguistics team, or by an experienced supervisor. No combined training is given for supervisors in the different programmes of the project, but an annual conference has been commenced for fellowship, interchange of reports, and cross fertilization of ideas. A superstructure of combined training programmes has been deliberately avoided in order to emphasize local independence of action, and to allow maximum local identification and adaptation to local culture.

*Participation of Women in the Literacy Programme.*

The encouragement of women in the literacy programme is a very definite part of our programme. Two factors have to be borne in mind in this:

i. The participation of women must be culturally acceptable, therefore

it must not come too soon in terms of acceptance to change. For this reason a steady but definite incorporation is preferred to a deliberate promotion of the teaching of women as a separate item.

ii. Avoiding problems of immorality. We have found that in most situations here in the North of Ghana there is a great deal of suspicion attached to the attendance of women at such things as the literacy classes. Therefore there is a very careful selection of teachers, and this has tended to overcome suspicion, and to bring about a healthy pattern of involvement of women in the work. Normally in the first stages they are taught either by relatives who have already learned to read, or in some cases, by local pastors or church elders where these are acceptable in general to the community. This normally leads to a situation where women can teach the classes after they themselves have learned to read. The results in the Bimoba area come out as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1972-73 Phase II | No women. |
| 1973-74 Phase III | A few women in mixed classes, and one women's class. |
| 1974-75 Phase IV | A few women in mixed classes, four classes specifically for women, and one woman teacher. |

The results in the Tampulma area are as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1973-74 Phase II | No women. |
| 1974-75 Phase II | A few mixed classes, one women's class with a woman teacher. |

*Basic Research.*

i. Local strategy for basic application of the model.
The cultural and social studies are conducted over an extensive period by the Institute of Linguistics team, and are ongoing studies, often in file card form, and therefore not available for sending to you. I am, however, sending to you an outline of the information used for case studies on the literacy projects, and will extract examples of the way in which this type of information affects the basic model, using Bimoba as our example.

Location, population distribution, and road system give us the details which, matched with other factors, give us the physical strategy. See the attached maps for the Bimoba area. It was decided to concentrate on Bunkpurugu and the adjacent area during 1972–73, to extend to Najoung and the adjacent area during 1973–74, and to extend to Nakpanduri and the adjacent area during 1974–75. At each

stage consolidation was to take place in the villages where work was already started. The 1975–76 season has been used for further consolidation, and to fill in gaps left for various reasons during previous years.

Religious groupings. The fact that Christians, though vigorous, were in a minority led us to choose a strategy in which clear emphasis was placed upon the fact that literacy was for all. The use of church buildings or promotion by Christians would have confirmed the commonly-held view that "Christianity" and "education" were synonymous. The churches agreed to give low-key support to the community literacy programme, which used secular facilities and was directly under the sponsorship of the chiefs and elders. This has been very well accepted, and is now proving justified by increased interest in Christian teaching. The non-religious start to the programme has enabled even members of the Bimoba secret society to enroll in the classes and later to become teachers.

Mutual intelligibility is established for the various dialects. The dialect chosen for materials was the prestige dialect of the Paramount Chief. There are 16 clans divided historically into 2 major groupings, the Dagbamm, and the Bemm. Work was started amongst the Dagbamm, but quickly followed by work in Bemm villages to prevent cleavage on clan lines. In several villages 2 classes have been necessary because of clan rivalries, and in each group of villages great care has been needed to establish classes first in villages with chieftaincy or clan seniority.

An understanding of the history of the Bimobas has enabled us to understand such factors as:

a. Relationship and rivalries of Bimobas to selected groups in Upper Region and in Northern Togo.

b. The position of the paramount chieftaincy which previously passed by seniority among certain of the clans, but is now tending to become established in the Jamong family.

c. Close historical and continuing affinities between villages which are quite separate geographically (the classical example is that of Bunkpurugu and Nakpanduri, which are at almost opposite ends of Bimoba territory, but with strong affinities). Such affinities can often be used for the introduction of new ideas when they would not be accepted from villages which were geographically closer.

d. Rivalry between clans, and its potential effect on literacy classes.

Opinion leaders. An understanding of the very clearly understood distinction between "burchimoo" and "momantdanoo" has been of tremendous value in choosing a correct approach to obtaining con-

sent for literacy programmes in various villages. The "burchimoo" or "righteous man" is motivated by desires for the well-being of the community, he is trusted by chief and elders, and will often be appointed by the chief to assist in certain projects. His attitude is generally quiet, and characterized by concern for others. An approach to such a man will give an excellent informal support for the programme to complement the formal support from the paramount chief. Such people become excellent sponsors for the literacy classes in a village when convinced of the value of literacy. The "momantdanoo" or "sweet mouth-owner" also referred to in English as a "political man" is the type of man that readily takes on outside causes, says sweet things, but is not ready to follow through with real assistance. Bimoba politeness would not allow even a chief to tell you directly that you are involved with such a man. No one will want to offend by disagreeing, so the work is agreed to, but does not last. Close integration into society is needed to avoid such men, plus a very real sensitivity to "hints" that you are choosing the wrong sponsor.

Certain observations concerning groupings in the social structure have caused us to abandon the idea among the Bimobas of a single teacher taking a class in favour of at least two teachers (sometimes with the class divided into A and B) and an "elders" system in the class to handle such matters as preparation of the classroom, discipline of the students, etc.

Certain clear similarities between the attitude to knowledge and teaching methods in the local schools, Christian churches, and secret societies have modified the teaching techniques in the classes, and given added impetus to motivation for literacy (sometimes at the cost of abandoning certain "more advanced" western teaching methods).

The Bimoba attitude of cautious approach to change, with just certain members testing any new method before the community as a whole accepts it, has caused us to avoid a "big campaign" or "hard-sell" approach. Requirements have been established before a village can have a literacy class. High standards have been emphasized, failures as well as successes have been made known, so that it has become a matter of competition and prestige to get a literacy class started in the village, become a teacher, or receive a certificate. Of course, behind the overt hesitancy to allow literacy there has been a great deal of covert promotion to make it a desireable thing. Those who have succeeded have been given prestige at literacy presentations, and in other ways.

I hope these few examples will serve to show you why it is not practicable to share with you a formally defined basic model. In the complex interrelated whole which is a culture, to which is added

the complex process of cultural change which is being accelerated by literacy, it is not considered wise to write out the strategy in too great detail. This tends to "fix" the strategy which must continue to be dynamic and adaptive if it is to succeed. Each team, therefore, works to basic principles and with clear objectives, but with maximum room for flexibility in obtaining these objectives. For example, in the Bimoba area the initial decision to avoid the use of church buildings for literacy classes has now been abandoned, because:

a. The non-sectarian nature of literacy has now been clearly established in the area, and

b. The encouragement of literacy classes in the churches will now help in the promotion of functionally-related literature societies for those Christians already made literate. Functionally related groups whose learners are drawn together by a common interest—Bible study, cotton farming, etc.—are a Government emphasis in Adult Education.

ii. The phrase "basic analysis" on page 12, Basic Research 2, refers to linguistic analysis. A sample of a phonological study is being sent. Grammatical descriptions have also been prepared.

*Payment by Participants*

Literacy primers are either purchased by the participants, or (in one project) loaned, but charged for if spoiled. Post-primer materials are all purchased by the local readers. Writing materials, pencils, kerosene for lighting, and so on are all paid for by the participants, so that costs at the literacy class level are only for the establishment of the class (blackboard, teacher-training, etc.). Progress, although slow, is being made in educating the local community in the need to take over other costs, such as supervisors' pay. A start has been made by some classes in the forming of literacy class farms where produce is sold to help with expenses. Some local gifts are also made at literacy day presentations.

Yours sincerely,

E. R. Rowland,
Director.

# Appendix B

The following chart shows the activities of which the literacy programmes are planned to consist. It is taken from the written proposal submitted by SIL to E.Z.E. in support of the Northern Ghana Literacy Project.

List of Activities:

Basic research

1. Prepare cultural and social studies leading to local planning. Establish basic application of the model.
2. Prepare linguistic analysis including approved orthography.

Materials preparation

3. Community relations—seek approval and begin orientation.
4. Prepare primers and first post-primers.
5. Approved materials in test form for Phase I.
6. Modify application of the model as cultural and social pressures indicate needs.

Phase I

7. Community relations—give further orientation.
8. Look for potential instructors for Phase II.
9. Teach trial classes to level of functional literacy.
10. Prepare further post-primer booklets.
11. Print primers and booklets for Phase II.
12. Train potential instructors.
13. Conduct remedial classes for strugglers.
14. Modify application of the model as cultural and social pressures indicate needs.

Phase II

15. Community relations—hold Literacy Day (award certificates, appoint instructors).
16. Give first-year training for potential supervisors.

17. Look for potential instructors for Phase III.
18. Teach advanced readers.
19. Teach Phase II classes to level of functional literacy.
20. Prepare further reading materials—include local author workshops.
21. Make contrastive analysis—prepare for "bridge" materials.
22. Print further reading materials.
23. Train potential instructors for Phase III.
24. Conduct remedial classes for strugglers.
25. Modify application of the model as cultural and social pressures indicate needs.

Phase III

26. Community relations—hold Literacy Day.
27. Give second-year training for supervisors and first-year training for further potential instructors.
28. Look for potential instructers for the next phase.
29. Teach advanced classes—"Book Club" for advanced readers.
30. Teach Phase III classes to level of functional literacy.
31. Conduct local author workshops.
32. Prepare "bridge" materials.
33. Print further reading materials in the local language.
34. Print materials bridging into the national language.
35. Train potential instructors.
36. Conduct remedial classes for strugglers.
37. Modify application of the model as cultural and social pressures indicate needs.

Phases IV and V (ongoing literacy)

38. Repeat Phase III, to continue literacy programme.
39. Start English language programme.

Literacy materials:
The goal of all materials was to develop the learners' ability to read any material written in daily-use vocabulary. This development required primers, post-primers, and basic reading booklets including 800–1,000 pages of reading material.

The model in practice:
It must be re-emphasized that 1) cultural and social conditions in each area will elicit a different application of the model, and 2) in no situation will there be a surface imitation of a previous application of the model since these five factors differ appreciably from one language area to another:

a. local system of chieftaincy and government
b. number of schools already operating in the area
c. number of literates available to train as literacy instructors
d. degree and type of motivation for literacy
e. the form of social change evolving because of literacy.

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